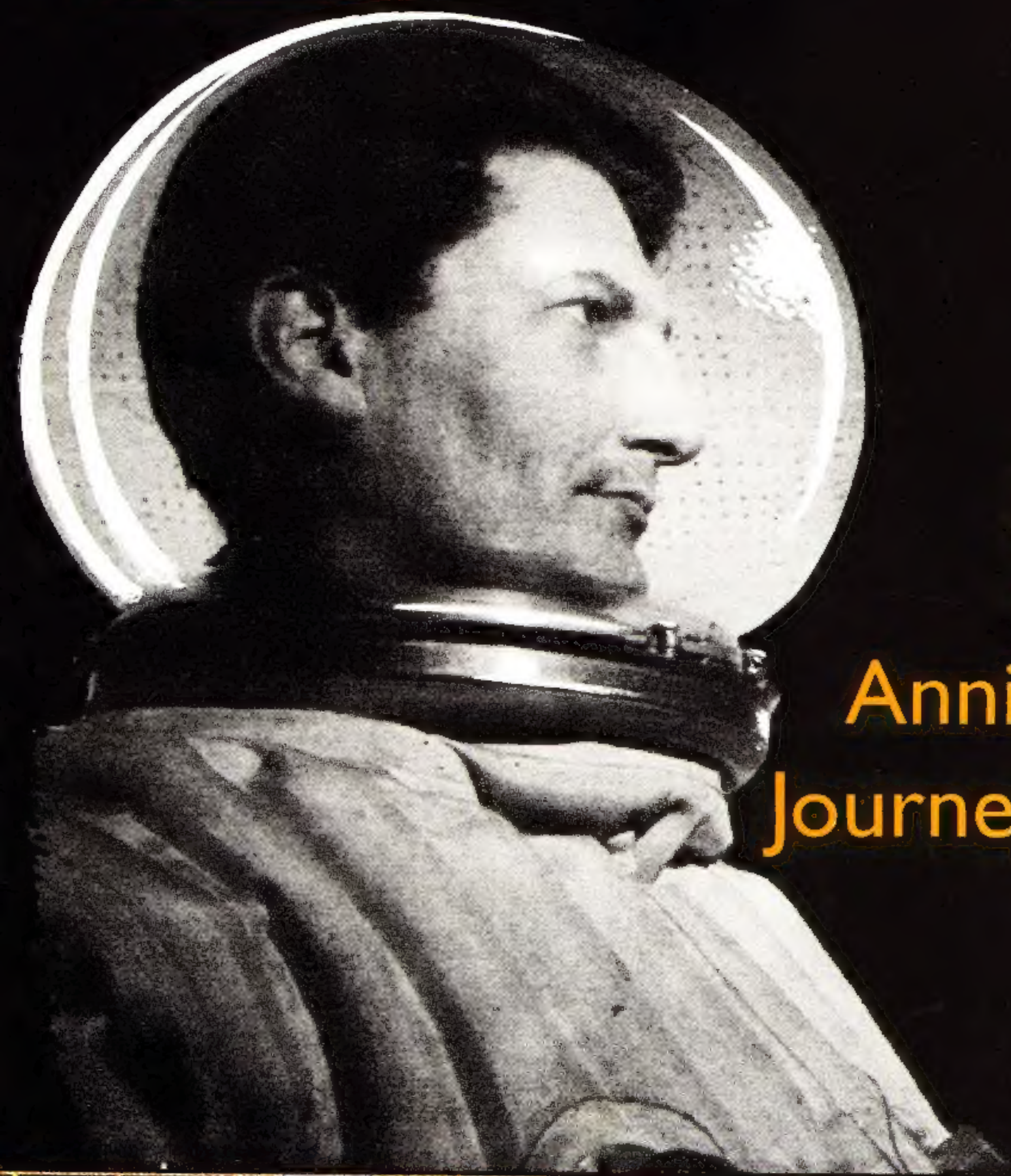


Vol.16 No. 2 Autumn 2003



EAGLE TIMES

The quarterly journal of the Eagle Society



50th

Anniversary of Journey into Space

THIRD

LIGHT

NORTH

WEST LONDON

MIDLAND

N.IRELAND

WALES

SCOTLAND

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The views expressed in **Eagle Times** are those of the contributors and are not necessarily shared by the journal or its production team

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EAGLE TIMES

Vol 16 No 3 Autumn

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of all
space ship
adventures

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Space**

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The quarterly journal
of the Eagle Society.

The Eagle 1950-69 is
dedicated to the memory
of Britain's National
Picture strip weekly-the Eagle.



Hello again.

Regrettably, we start yet another editorial with some sad news. Martin Aitchison's wife Dorothy passed away in July after a short illness. Martin tells us that she never saw her photo in EAGLE Times as she was too ill to see it on publication. Our condolences were sent to Martin and his family when we heard the news.

In our Summer issue two mistakes went through on the report of Peter Jackson's funeral. It was not Peter's son who taught him fencing, for Peter had no children: it was a friend, and our apologies to Jeremy Beadle as we spelt his name wrong! A letter of apology was sent to Valerie, Peter's widow.

For this issue we remind you that it is now fifty years since "Journey into Space" started on our radios. Adrian Perkins and Tony Cowley recall the series with some new information.

For the third time this year we feature Dan Dare in our colour centre spread. The centre pages show the full set of the Clevedon sweet cigarette cards published in 1960. Not up to the artistic standard of the Calvert toothpaste cards of 1953, the Clevedon cards are much harder to find and do command a high price at dealers.

PC49 starts a new adventure in this issue, "The Case Of The Wrong Murder". This is Alan Stranks at his best! An excellent story with a complicated plot that all falls into place at the end. It has a similarity with "The Case of the Magnificent Mouse" story in EAGLE in as much as a criminal impersonates a smelly, ragged old man.

One of the best Riders of the Range stories in EAGLE was "Jeff Arnold and Billy the Kid" and, in our series The radio stories, we compare how William Bonney's story was transmitted and how it was put over in cartoon strip form.

We will have gone to press by the time the Manchester dinner/weekend comes along so a full report will appear in the Christmas E.T. Next years dinner is booked at St Columba's retreat in Woking, the dates being 2nd, 3rd and 4th April, 2004. The warden, the Rev. Jenkins, took EAGLE as a boy and well remembers it. His assistant, Sister Frances, also took Girl, so the management of this Anglican retreat are certainly in the picture about what we are remembering. More information in the Christmas issue.

At the 2001 EAGLE Society dinner at Ely one of our guests, John Batchelor, EAGLE cutaway artist, said he would give the Society one of his original cutaway drawings to auction for club funds, This he has done - details in this magazine. Our thanks to John for this gesture.

Geoffrey Bond returns to the script writing of Justin Tyme in this issue with assistance from Martin Aitchison. The last frame in the episode is Martin's.

Hope you enjoy our efforts.

Regards

'The Team'

It is now just over fifty years since JOURNEY INTO SPACE was first broadcast and still the memory remains.

It is far more than a horse opera set in outer space which is all that the BBC asked Charles Chilton for.

This is our tribute.

THE RIVALS OF DAN DARE: **JET MORGAN**

by Adrian Perkins and Tony Cowley

This is an article in two parts as Jet Morgan - just like Dan Dare - appeared as a character on radio and in the cartoon strip format.

Hopefully it will complement our series of articles on the same topic published in 1999/2000.

Jet Morgan first appeared in the BBC radio series 'Journey into Space' during the Autumn of 1953. Seven-thirty on the evening of Monday 21st September to be precise.

He was not then the leading character; that was his father - who was in charge of a rocket proving ground in the United States - and Jet was a pilot of a stratospheric airliner designed by his father.

Jet, along with his radio operator from the airliner, Lemmy Barnet, seems to be able to quit flying the private stratospheric airliner easily enough, to join a crew of roving interplanetary adventurers in various atomic-engined spaceships.

Jet Morgan was played by 30-year-old Scottish actor Andrew Faulds, and the as-broadcast Jet possessed many of Andrew's characteristics and interests. Captain Jet Morgan led a crew of four. He possessed the decisive tones of a leader.

There were three broadcast stories and then five in the strip cartoon format (two of which were short Annual tales). All eight stories were written by Charles Chilton - although some of the later tales in strip cartoon format are not in the same clever vein that are normally associated with his writings, and consequently they are almost certainly not of his authorship. Chilton showed he has a flair for creating high suspense whether he is writing books or plays.

Perfect casting, coupled with Chilton's literate and imaginative script, made the whole thing totally believable. Listeners were readily able to suspend their disbelief and thrill to the adventures of Jet and his intrepid crew.



Described in the Radio Times at the time of the first broadcast as 'a spine-chilling adventure series', this was putting it mildly!

The adults of the 1950s enjoyed the fantastic adventures of Jet Morgan and his crew in rocketship Luna because they provided a fascinating glimpse of a not-too-distant-future. It was a novelty to them although to their children it was just an adventure taking place in a scenario bound to happen tomorrow.



The cast in October 1954 at BBC's Broadcasting House, London.

L to R David Kossoff, Andrew Faulds,
Don Sharp and Guy Kingsley Poynter.

The radio broadcasts were in 1953/54, 1954/55 and 1955/56, having 18, 20 and 20 episodes respectively. They were called Journey Into Space, The Red Planet and The World In Peril respectively.

Each of the three novelisations of the radio serials was published some time after the serials were broadcast. Copyright problems meant these novelisations could not be published until 1954, 1956 and 1960. The radio serials adapted into novels became three outstanding stories of space fiction.

The cast in October 1955.

L to R Guy Kingsley Poynter, Don Sharp, Alfie Bass and Andrew Faulds.

Mrs Chilton, although involved with Charles's Riders of the Range stories, did not provide detailed subject research for his science fiction adventures. This resulted in fairly complex plots in the radio series, utilising all the radio trickery available at the time so - one of the many reasons that we young listeners got an extremely believable sound picture from our wirelasses.

Blandly stated the adventures concerned a trip to the Moon - including flying saucers, time travel and ancient civilisations - then two voyages to Mars involving giants, hypnotism and transported earthmen.

In 1958 a second version of the Moon trip was broadcast by the BBC Light Programme to justify the expense of rerecording it for Transcription Service sales. This was called Operation Luna.

David Jacobs did not appear in the first broadcast series at all and the familiar introduction was intoned by the narrator - who transmogrified into Doctor Matthews - Guy Kingsley Poynter.



INSIDE

Jet Morgan



**SEE
HIM FOR THE
FIRST TIME**



*His latest
journey into
space*

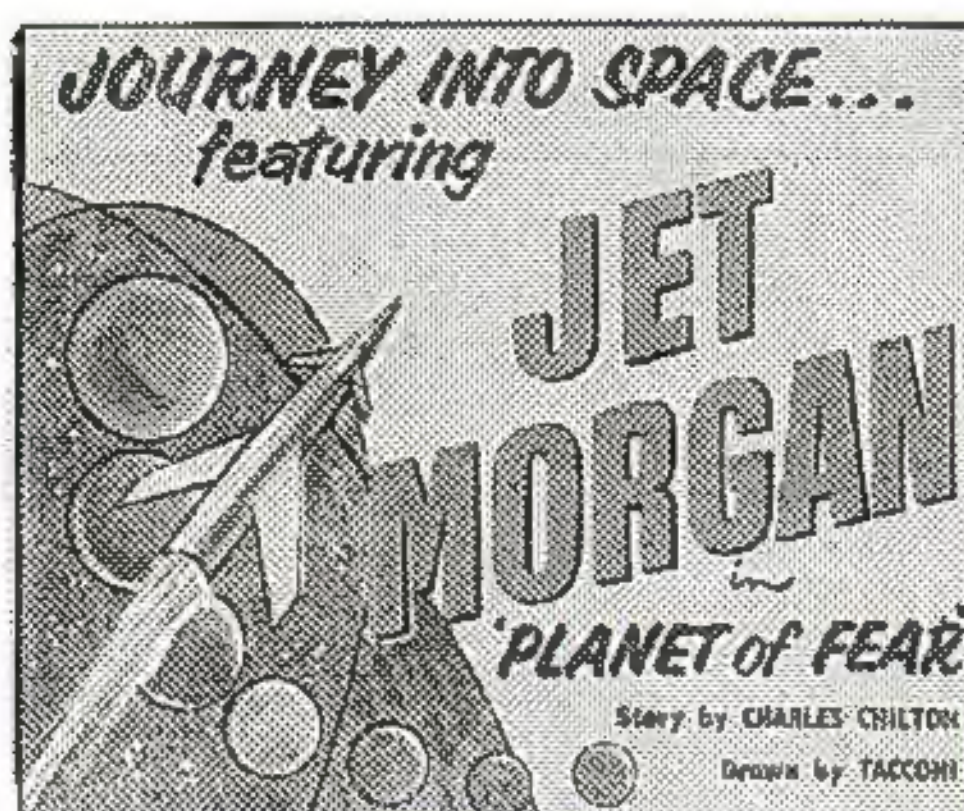
**- PLANET
of FEAR -**

begins on Pages 8 and 9

We now progress to the printed version in the Express supercolour Weekly.



First episode in Express Weekly



The strip cartoon format stories began several months after the main radio series drew to a close in late-winter 1956. All the tales that were related in this format lasted in total about a year and a half.

It must be noted that the actors playing the

characters Lemmy and 'Mitch' altered during the years that the serials were being broadcast (David Kossoff/Alfie Bass and Bruce Beeby/Don Sharp respectively), resulting in the characters being portrayed in the cartoon strip tales being those acting in the third radio story. The Canadian actor Guy Kingsley Poynter played the character Doctor Matthews in all three serials.

Once it had purchased a copyright on Journey into Space it was arranged that Chilton and Tacconi would be in close contact for many months to ensure that the artist got the 'feel' for the story.

The publishers correctly calculated that presenting this adventure would bring many extra sales.

In April 1956 the 'Journey Into Space featuring Jet Morgan' serial began.

Essentially a follow-on to the final radio adventure, The Planet of Fear was a closer look at some of the points raised in The World in Peril. It ran to 35 colourful episodes. The next story, Shadow Over Britain, continued the narrative in 32 episodes - although, with it having several changes of artist, it drifted away from the concept envisaged by Chilton. Now much less exciting, the series lumbered in to a final story: The World Next Door was shortlived at 9 episodes.

In Express Weekly the strip occupied the coloured centrespread pages, although it always shared the whole pages with other items of varying size. Drawing the strip must have been a real headache...

The artist most associated with Journey Into Space was the Italian Ferdinando Tacconi. He had been working for Express Weekly for some months beforehand, contributing Jeff Hawke stories.

As the short stories destined for the Annual are usually executed in April for publication in the following September, the Annual stories are drawn by the artists being currently used by the weekly publication and the standalone stories are not connected at all with the main adventure.

The first, entitled Jet Morgan and the Space Pirates, was a black and white Tacconi-illustrated tale, whilst the second - Jet Morgan and the Space Castaway - (of even less consequence) was a coloured story drawn by Bruce Cornwell.

Chesley Bonestell plate



The story seems to have fallen apart when Tacconi ceased illustrating the strip. By the tenth episode of Shadow over Britain he had quit. He was followed in the weekly artistic role by Bruce Cornwell then Terence Patrick.

The final episode of the final story - now stated only to be based upon Chilton's characters - was published in October 1957.

In the first novelisation - in 1954 - Stephen Mitchell is stated as being aged 36 and Lemmy Barnet is described as 'stocky'. The dust jacket illustration spacecraft was adopted as the standard vehicle - though the artist Ron Jobson had adapted a 1952 Chesley Bonestell plate for his very evocative illustration.



Frames from "Planet of Fear", the first Express Weekly story
Art by Tacconi

Jet Morgan in action.



Express Weekly Annual no.1



The Radio Times official photographer was the special guest subject of the TV 'What's My Line' programme in 1954. A filmed insert done in her studio for the transmission elicited this pose.



"Space Pirates" again by Tacconi.

The THEME from

JOURNEY INTO SPACE

THE POPULAR BBC SERIES

PIANO SOLO
Composed by
VAN PHILLIPS



PRICE

2½
NET

The sheet music for Van Phillips' main theme was published during 1954. The composer never commercially recorded the score. ☐

and

The Case of the Wrong Murder

Adapted from Alan Stranks' radio story

by James Howard

The people in and around Primrose Hill, in London, had enjoyed a pleasant summer's day and, as the afternoon came to an end, Joan Carr was serving tea to her policeman fiancé in her flat. Archie was feeling rather grumpy as, for the second week in a row, he was on late shift again and he was not giving much thought to what he was eating. He took a gulp of tea and stuffed some bread and butter in his mouth as Joan started to remind him of the time.

"Come on, darling - eat up or you'll be late for muster."

Archie pulled a face and replied "There ought to be a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Coppers. And if there was, they'd abolish late turn."

"That's just what you were saying about late turn last week," Joan reminded him.

With a scowl, her fiancé replied "I was on late turn last week - what's the time, darling?"

Sarcastically Joan said "If you want to know the time, ask a policeman! That clock's fast, so it makes it exactly five thirty p.m. on a lovely summer's evening."

Still feeling negative Archie said "It'll be raining before midnight, for a start."

"Aren't we the happy chap, today?" said Joan as she handed her policeman a boiled egg in an egg cup. "Here you are - and guaranteed new-laid."

Archie tapped the top of his egg with his spoon, and with a faraway expression said "Ta. Are you sure that clock's five minutes fast?"

"I checked it with the wireless this morning. Anyway, what's wrong with your watch?"

With a mouthful of egg Archie spluttered "It's been playing tricks ever since I had that set-to with Shaver Gleeson last week - and last night it packed up completely."

"Well, you'd better get it fixed. We can't have a London policeman walking around incapable of telling anyone the time."

An hour later Archie was summoned by the Duty Officer in the station. "Hey, Fortynine! Just a minute."

Archie replied "What is it Sarge?"

"You're on Beat Three, aren't you?"

Such is my ill fortune, Sarge."

"Well, you know thirteen Furleigh Road - old Septimus Parrott's place?"

"Who wouldn't? I smell it every time I pass. It's a disgrace, Sarge. What's wrong there? Chimney on fire or ..."

"Lost property turned in this morning. You'd better drop it in to him. Here!"

Archie took a bankbook from the Sergeant and looked at it incredulously for a moment. "What's this? Bank Passbook? Sergeant Frost! Don't tell me that old rag runs a bank account!"

Frost gave a knowing look. "If you open that book - which you've no right to do - you'll find that Septimus Parrott has a credit balance of eight thousand, seven hundred and ninety two pounds, eleven shillings at Lamprey's Bank ... and probably a lot more tucked away in odd corners of that ramshackle dump where he's lived for the past thirty years."

"My Sunday helmet! If he's got a bank roll that big, why does the dirty old crow spend half his time rummaging in garbage cans?" Archie blurted out.

Frost continued, "Funny thing about old Parrott. When I was a rookie he used to be a spry-looking young fellow who ran a watchmaker's shop in the High Street. Pretty good craftsman too. He could repair anything that ticked."

Suddenly Archie's broken watch filled his memory and he murmured "That reminds me ..."

Ignoring Fortynine's mumbling, the Sergeant continued. "He married a proper tartar. Local butcher's daughter. Three or four years after they were married her old man kicked the bucket and she inherited a nice little packet. They bought that place at thirteen Furleigh Road - and a very nice house it was in those days."

Archie's face dropped as he came into the present. "It's the worst eye-sore in the Division now - the garden looks like a deserted graveyard."

Sergeant Frost replied dryly "Graveyards are never deserted! Funny you should say that though. About eighteen months after they took



"Hey, Fortynine!
Just a minute!"

that place, Parrott's wife vanished. We didn't hear anything about it for some weeks. I remember it was the first case Chief Inspector Wilson did as a C.I.D. officer."

Cynically, a reply came from the constable. "Crikey - if you worked on it with him, Sarge - you must have been one of the original Bow Street Runners."

The Duty Officer raised his voice at this. "A little less sauce, my lad, when you are talking to - and about - your superior officers."

Told off, the subordinate replied "Sorry, Sarge. Go on."

"Well, apparently Parrott and his missus used to fight like cat and dog. So when one of the nosy neighbours came and gave us a bit of free information about how Mrs Parrott hadn't been seen around the place for some weeks, and Parrott himself was behaving a bit peculiar, Wilson was detailed to make enquiries."

Deep in thought, Archie replied "And what did he learn?"

"Well ... first Parrott was a bit cagey ..."

Archie instantly saw a joke and said "Ah - you are a scream this evening, Sarge," but Frost ignored it and carried on.

"Then he said they'd had a terrible up-and-downer and she'd walked out on him. He swore he'd no idea where she'd gone."

Archie screwed his nose up. "Hm. Smells a bit fishy."

Frost nodded in agreement. "That's what Wilson said. He thought he'd found another Crippen case. And lor lumme - did he have us digging."

"I can imagine," Archie mused as the Sergeant continued.

"Sergeant Wright was a constable in those days - him and me - and three or four other blokes you wouldn't know of dug up every square inch of that ruddy garden for three feet down without finding a perishing thing."

After a short silence, Archie said "So what happened?"

Frost continued, "Nothing. Seven years after, she was presumed dead and Parrott was granted Probate of the will which she'd made in his favour. Nine thousands pounds he got - and the house."

"What made him give up watch-making and go scavenging if he got all that dough?" Archie inquired.

Thoughtfully the sergeant went on "Ah, you've seen them, Fortynine. They're all over London. Some of them educated - some of good family. They get crossed in love - get the wrong end of a law suit or something like that - and round the bend they go."

Fortynine reflected "Parrott's round the bend all right. I've never seen a scruffier specimen in all my born days. He can't have had a bath in years. And he must cut that beard of his with a bread knife."

Frost replied "He's a richer man than you or me'll ever be. And if you don't believe me, take an illegal look at this pass book."

Archie did as he was told and said. "Where was it found, Sarge?"

"By the garbage cans behind Mindano's café. Must have dropped it last night while he was rummaging for his supper." Frost then realised how long they had been chatting and with an air of authority said "Anyway, what are you standing here gabbling for? Aren't you supposed to be on duty?"

Feeling hard done by, the constable said "Me gabbling! Well, I like that! I didn't ask you to tell me about 1066 and All That."

Frost pointed a finger at his constable. "That'll be enough from you, Fortynine! Go on - hop it!"

Thirty minutes later Fortynine stood outside the residence of S. Parrott and screwed his nose up once again. Reluctantly he approached the door and gave a hard set of knocks. After a short pause, footsteps could be heard and the door was opened. What looked like an animated scarecrow emerged and stared at his visitor. "Yes. What do you want?" was his frosty greeting.

"Septimus Parrott I presume?" asked Archie.

"What's that?" said Parrott. The question was repeated. "Who says I'm not?" Archie had had enough of the smell and the verbal ping pong. He produced the bank book. "Is this yours?"

Parrott's eyes shot up! "Give me that. I've been looking for it all day. Who stole it?"

"Some honest citizen of 'Q' Division dropped it in at headquarters earlier this morning, having found it behind Mindano's café - which highly expensive establishment no doubt supplied you with supper last night - free and second-hand."

Parrott stared at the book. "You say you brought it back to me, eh?"

Archie handed the bank book over. "It looks like it, doesn't it?"

Grudgingly the bank book owner said "Well, thank you - see."

But now the smell was getting to the policeman and he said "I rather felt I was wasting my sweetness on the desert air. Phew! What have you got in that house?"

Parrott's face changed as he snapped, "That's my business."

"Maybe," said Fortynine as he turned to go; but then remembered his broken watch. "Oh, by the way - I hear you're an absolute wizard when it comes to watches."

"Eh? None better."

From his pocket Archie took out the watch and gave it to the watch repairer. "Okay. Take a look at this."

"Eh? What is it?"

The owner answered, "Well, it was a watch the last time I looked at it but something has gone wrong with the works."

Momentarily, Fortynine pulled back a few inches as Parrott's smelly, grime-encrusted hand reached out for the watch. "A watch, eh? Let's have a look at it." He turned it over in his filthy hand and then said in a mumbling voice "Hm - they don't make them like they used to ..." He broke off as he opened the back with his unkempt, dirty nails.

"Hey, steady! I'm fond of that watch," protested Archie.

Parrott gave him a bitter look and said, "I've got to get the back off it, haven't I?" Parrott peered into the watch and mumbled disparagingly, "Hm ... Eighteen jewels! You were robbed on this one, mister."

The watch's owner asked, "Can anything be done with it?"

"Yes - chuck it away!" came the reply. "Chuck it away - it's not worth repairing."

In a state of mild panic Archie returned "Here - wait a minute! Give me that watch!"

"It's no good I tell you," Parrott insisted.

But Archie wanted his property back. "Never mind that. Come on - give."

"All right - all right," said the watchmaker as he handed the watch back to the owner. As Parrott still had the back, Archie ordered him to hand that over too. Parrott did as requested and with a click put the back on the timepiece. "There y'are! But I'm telling you it's no good."

"Thanks," said Archie and then once again the stench hit him! "And listen, Mr. Parrott. If you



"A watch, eh?
Let's have a
look at it,"
said Parrott.

don't clean up this cage of yours, you'll have the sanitary inspector around." Thankful that his business was over he walked away saying "So long."

While Fortynine was having this conversation with Septimus Parrott, two people were also discussing matters to do with that fragrant gentleman.

A few blocks away Mark Helston, a bank manager of recent promotion, was talking to his uncle, Milton Charvey, in Helston's flat. Helston, who was in his early thirties, had been with Lamprey's Bank since he left Grammar School. Unbeknown to the bank, he had a criminal mind and had worked his way up the promotional ladder, biding his time to make a financial killing at the bank or someone's expense. He thought the time had come to pull off his dream.

"His name, my dear Uncle Milton, is Septimus Parrott," said Mark as he sipped a whiskey.

Milton downed a sip of his drink and observed, "Sounds like something out of Dickens."

"He is something out of Dickens - an elderly Barnaby Rudge," came the reply.

Milton took another gulp of his drink. "Mm. Well, suppose you tell me what's on your mind, my dear Mark?"

Mark started. "Very well. The next time the inspectors descend on the High Street Branch of Lamprey's Bank, they're going to find a deficiency of nearly four thousand pounds."

Milton gave a laugh. "When I heard you'd been promoted to Manager I had a feeling it wouldn't be long before this happened. You'd better grab as much more of the Bank's funds as you can and abscond."

A smile went across Mark's face as he said "I've a better plan - if I can depend on your co-operation, Uncle Milton. When I took over from the previous manager, I found myself involved in one of those very peculiar cases that sometimes arise in banking."

"Septimus Parrott, eh?" butted in the uncle.

"Exactly - an eccentric with an account of nearly nine thousand pounds."

"Which is now four thousand pounds less than he believes it to be." Mark smiled again. "His signature was very simple to copy."

"To forge! H'm! And you propose to relieve him of the remaining five thousand!"

"He'll have a great deal more in three months' time," Mark said.

"A legacy?" questioned Milton.

"An endowment policy with the Planet Assurance Company."

"For how much?"

"Eighteen thousand pounds."

Milton was enjoying this and said out aloud "A-a-ah! That's better!"

Mark continued. "He inherited a considerable amount of money from his wife - and this has been used, in part, to pay the premiums."

"On a banker's order?"

"Precisely."

Milton nodded his head as he did the simple mental arithmetic. "Eighteen, plus five - twenty three thousand. H'mm ... interesting. Continue, nephew!"

Mark did so. "Parrott also owns the freehold of number thirteen Furleigh Road, which is in the centre of a high-class residential neighbourhood. I know for a fact he's been offered twelve thousand for the site."

"And you say he's a complete recluse - a hermit?"

The answer came from Mark after another sip of his drink. "Yes. I suggested he should make a will. He told me he has no living relative and friends. I've watched him carefully; and, from what I've seen, I should say he has no contact with anybody beyond his monthly visits to me. He's so filthy it's almost necessary to fumigate my office after he's been there."

Milton was beginning to cotton on as to what was going through his nephew's mind. "And this, my dear Mark, is the role you suggest that I, your own uncle, should play?"

"You're the same height and build. A couple of months dieting should pull you down to his

weight. Your eyes are the same colour. If your hair were filthy enough and you had sufficient growth of beard, I've no doubt you could pass for Septimus Parrott."

Musing, Milton said softly. "The man nobody knows."

"Tradesmen never call at the house. He draws five pounds from me each month in cash, and ekes out a miserable existence on that - and what he can cull from garbage cans. His insurance premiums, rates etc, are paid by Banker's order."

"H'mm ... How long have we got, Mark?"

"Providing the inspectors don't drop in unexpectedly, we have just thirteen weeks to the half-year balance."

Milton whistled. "Three months, eh? Well, the next thing, obviously, is for me to start growing a beard."

The following evening it was tea at Joan's once again for Archie.

"More tea, Darling? asked Joan.

"In a minute, I haven't finished this one yet, Darling," responded the policeman. "Oh, by the way - this watch." He placed it on the table.

"Did you get it mended?" asked Joan.

"No," said her fiancé in a deadpan voice. "It's a dead loss."

"That's a pity. You'll have to use my wrist watch till we can afford a new one," said his fiancée.

With a mouthful of sandwich, Archie revealed a plan. "Constable Dawson's got a fairly decent one he offered to sell me for two quid."

"Then you'd better get it."

"He'll wait for his money till next pay day too. Might even take ten bob a week."

"What shall I do with this one?" Joan asked.

"Chuck it away. It's u.s." was the reply.

Joan felt quite hurt at this as she had bought it for Archie as a present. She showed her annoyance; "I like that! My present to you!"

Archie did have some qualms, but said "Sorry, Darling. But old watches are a nuisance. They hang around for years cluttering up the place and ..."

He got no further as Joan chipped in: "I'd have thought you'd want to keep it for sentimental reasons."

Archie gave in. "Okay. Put it in the vase behind the clock - which I hope is five minutes fast as usual"

"I've no doubt you could pass for Septimus Parrott", said Mark.



His hopes were dashed. "It's not. I put it right by the nine o'clock news last night," Joan told him.

A groan came from Archie. "Oh crikey - there goes my second cup of char. I daren't be late for muster again tonight."

Three months later Archie was on evening shift again. Where his beat came to an end was where Constable Joe Dawson's started and the two policemen would compare notes before returning to their allotted area.

Joe spoke first on this evening. "Hello, Fortynine. How's that watch I sold you?"

The watch had indeed been a good buy and its new owner was well pleased with it. "It's a little smasher, Joe - hasn't varied more than two minutes in the three months I've had it."

Joe looked thoughtful. "I let you have it too cheap," he said.

Archie was worried for a second. "Crikey - you're not going to try and raise the price on a three-month-old deal, are you?"

Just then a voice came from along the street. "Fortynine ..." It was Sergeant Wright. The two constables acknowledged his greeting as he walked up to them and told them the nature of his business. "There's a body down in the Mortuary I'd like you to take a look at."

"A stiff? Oh Blimey, I was just going for refreshments in the canteen," said a disappointed Archie.

"Well, you can drop in after that. You too, Dawson."

"Whose body is it, Sarge?" inquired Archie.

"An unknown fished out of the canal on the section you two patrol. You might be able to identify him."

"Any suspicious circumstances?" asked Fortynine.

Continued

Martin Aitchison: My Story

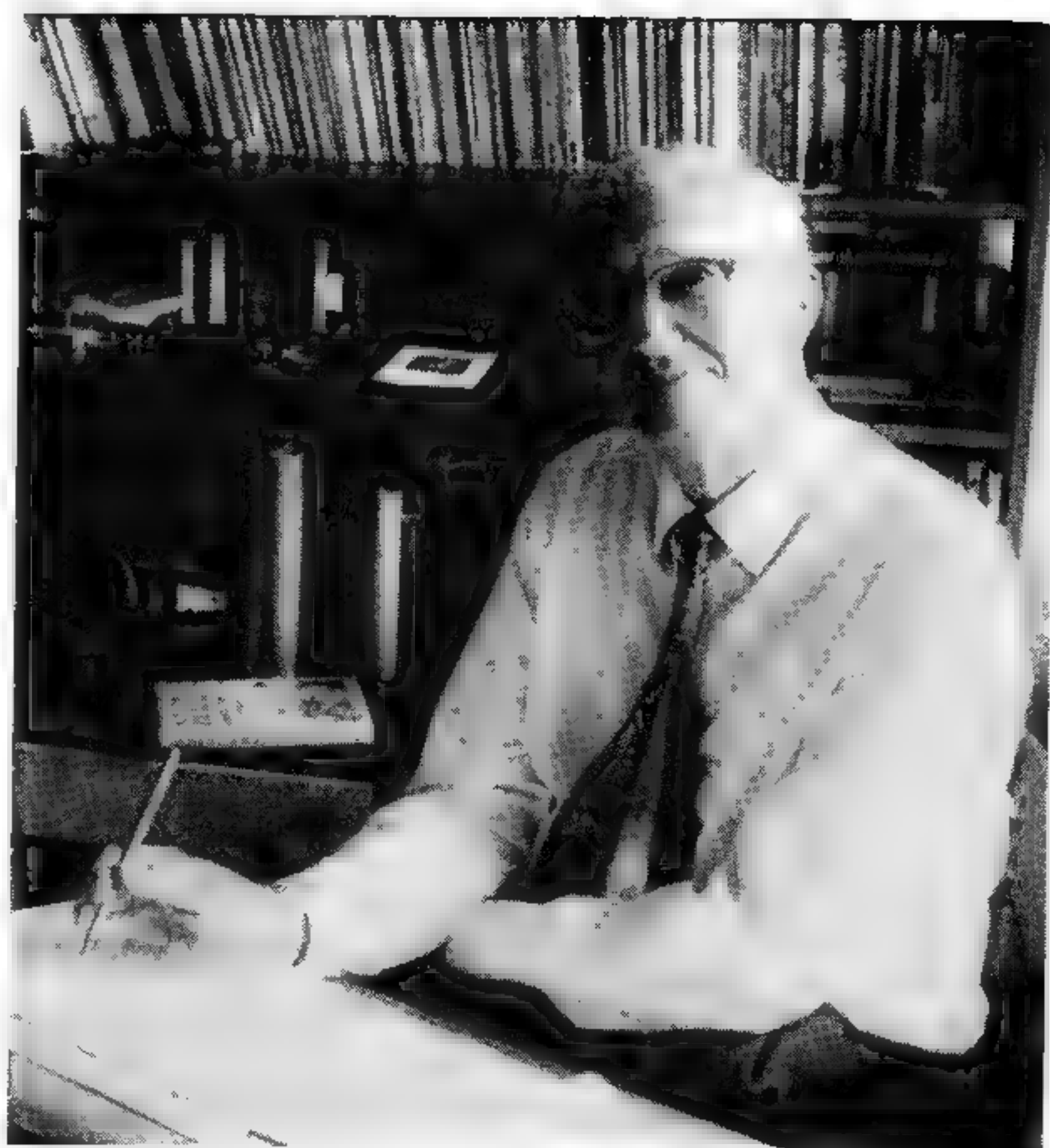
Part 2

About this time (1961) we acquired a VW Camper and, after testing it (and ourselves) in the Lake District, went across the Channel and had some wonderful holidays in France, Spain and Italy. Dorothy spoke very good French and got by on the other two, whilst I remain deaf in all three languages!

Our son Nick, then 11, acquired a taste for travel that has not left him. To be able to be away for two or three weeks it was necessary to get that far ahead with my strip, and only with Geoffrey, always ahead of schedule, was this possible. Recently David Gould wrote to me on the fact that I drew every episode of Luck (and the rest of my strips), whilst most other artists had a stand-in now and again. My reason for doing so was twofold. One that I would lose my paypacket and secondly there was ever the fear that someone would turn out so superior a version of my strip that the editor would make the obvious swap. I am sure every footballer must eye the hungry reserves on the bench with the same apprehension.

In the middle of 'Danger Unlimited', Hulton Press was sold to I.P.C., and all changed. One day, I brought in my weekly effort and found the place empty of familiar faces. Then Frank Bellamy turned up with his work, and we gloomed together a while, uncertain what the future held. Soon we met Mr Vincent, the new sub-Editor, and John Jackson, the new Art Editor.

Now I've no doubt that these two were first-class chaps, but we were from different worlds, Hulton versus I.P.C. I felt they were rather enjoying taking over from their more successful rivals in the field of comics over the past decade. Who wouldn't! Things started to slip, Guineas were dropped for £s and I never got any assurance that at the end of each story there would be one to follow for me until the very last episode was handed in. All very unsettling, and with a 12-year-old son at school and a mortgage etc etc it was the equivalent of taking a job with a one-day notice set-up. So it was no surprise to see my wife hot-footing it back to teaching. As it happened, when 'Danger Unlimited' ended there followed a last-minute reprieve, with 'The Lost World'. I enjoyed this very much but had no idea who was writing the script till I went to my son's Sports Day and Richard Jennings was there too, his son at the same school. I only knew him as an artist and was



surprised when he made kind comments on my drawing of 'The Lost World' and revealed that he was the script-writer. A man of many talents was Richard Jennings.

Following 'The Lost World' came the 'Hornblower' series, script-writer anon ... but based on such superb books. Just as I went to see Burt Lancaster for Luck, I took my sketch pad to Greenwich for details of period ships and Naval matters. Double-spreads of twenty or more frames were produced each week with often a last minute request (demand) from John Jackson for a cover drawing too. Then, what with the uncertainty of never knowing till the last minute if another story was waiting for me at the end of the current one, and signs that the *EAGLE* was beginning to moul, I started looking round for a new publisher. And so, refusing the last-minute offer of a new story, I made for the door.

About that time the brilliant artist James Holdaway who did Modesty Blaise (a glamorous female James Bond) in the Evening Standard died young. As soon as I heard this, and very much fancying those dead man's shoes, I sent in some samples from 'Danger Unlimited'. I got a very favourable reply, but someone had pipped me to it. At first he was not too successful I thought, the first artist being a very difficult act to follow, but later he got it just right. I'm not certain I could have done as well. In my early advertising days my agent complained that my girls "look so innocent", a quality somewhat remote from those required



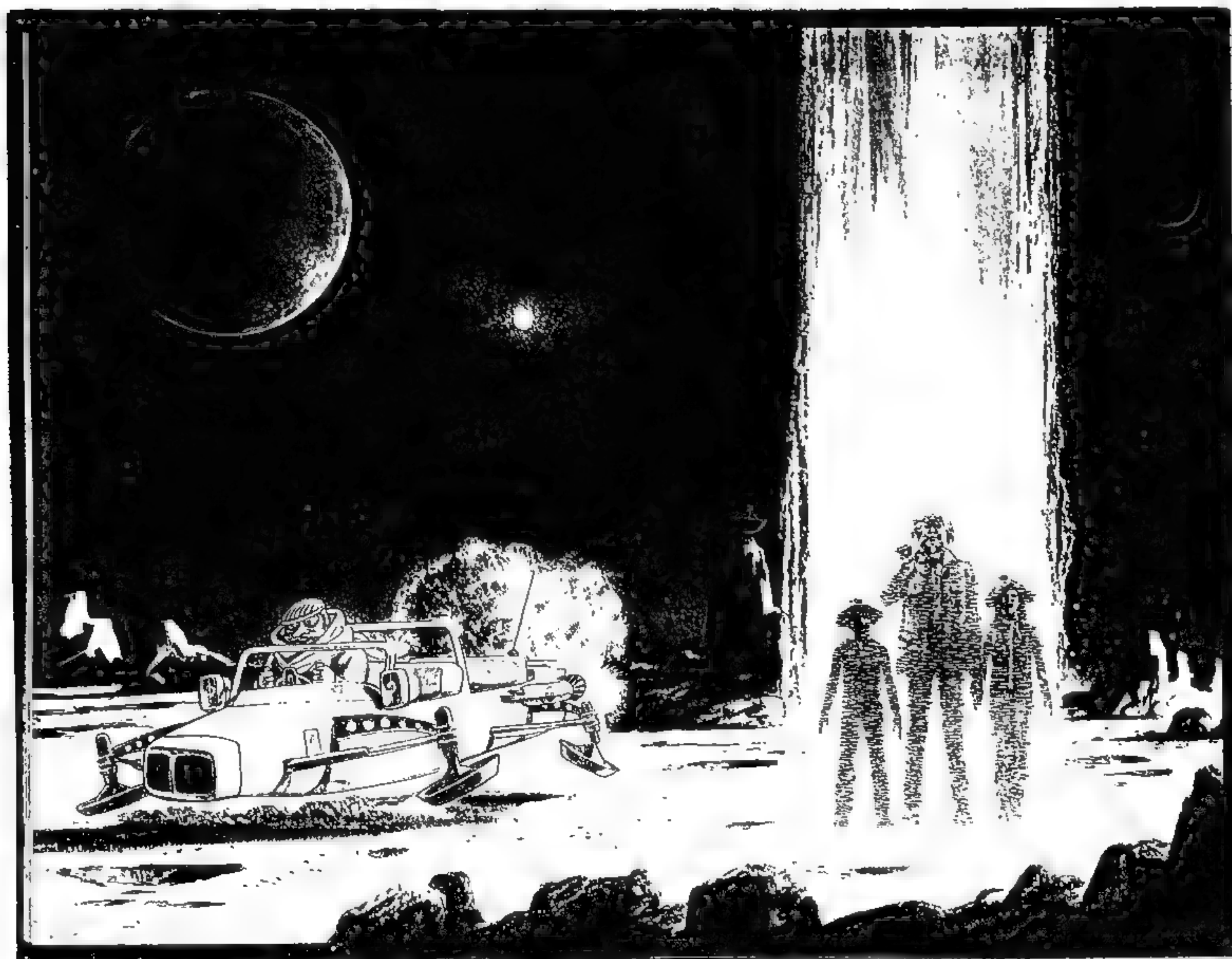
"Danger Unlimited" had a change of name in a reprint, in colour, when it appeared in "Wham! and Pow!" annual 1973.

for 'Modesty Blaise, for all her name.

One last connection with *EAGLE* came with an invitation from Rosemary Garland, then working for another publisher, who wanted illustrations for a new Foreign Legion strip, published in "booklet" form. This series was called 'Dirk of the Legion', which rang familiar bells in my mind and was no doubt intended to do the same for as many as possible purchasers. Dirk was Trenet really, but the tough sergeant was not Luck, more like John Wayne, craggy. I just drew it in line, the colouring being added by the printers, in Belgium, very haphazardly too. One page ended with the pair legging it across the desert wearing blue jackets and red trousers, the next frame, when you turned the page, shows them in blue trousers and red jackets, a mid-stride tunic swap. I got a free copy, but never heard of them again.

Somehow then I found my way to Ladybird Books. Douglas Keen, first editor, had the idea of publishing a reading scheme using pictures of real children, in colour, rather than the usual line drawings or cartoon characters. This was extremely difficult, especially for me, coming from black and white line and colour, with tough men,

to switch to little girls with bows in their hair and no black line. It was an ambitious scheme of 36 books, drawn twice due to changing fashions, so 'Peter and Jane' were born, eventually selling over 80 million copies world-wide. We had to find kids to pose for the pictures (as near as kids can, which is not very near) and took photos that would end us up in a nasty place today, our pleas of innocence ignored. "This man took a photograph of a child in a bathing costume, m'lud." Off with his head! But in those days no one thought anything of it and the kids who *weren't* chosen to be Peter or Jane were the ones who made a fuss. This series has now become fairly collectable, enabling me and others to sell originals which were returned, the law holding that publishers purchase only the copyright not the original drawing. I did a lot of other Ladybirds apart from Peter and Jane. One of these was 'The Lost World' and the editor, hearing that I had done an *EAGLE* version, wanted to see it, so I sent it in. But it was returned without comment and I was disappointed with the very flaccid script which arrived. I suppose they had different, younger, readers compared with *EAGLE*.



Juvenile science fiction : Martin's "The Giants of Universal Park"

A Ladybird Achievements Book



THE STORY OF

Metals

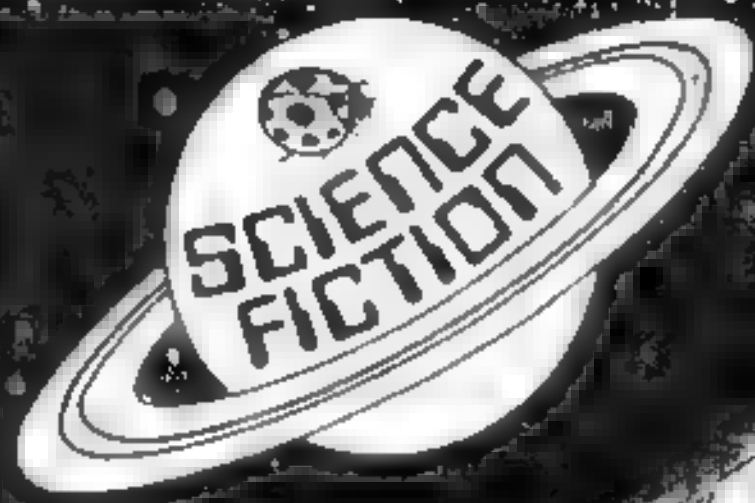


THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS

How to SWIM and DIVE



A Ladybird Book



THE GIANTS OF UNIVERSAL PARK

FRED
AND
GEOFFREY
HOYLE

Robert Ayton had preceded me to Ladybird and produced a number of attractive books. After I had started working for them Frank Hampson wrote to me to ask if there was a chance he could do a 'Life of Christ' for them, as he had for *EAGLE*. I showed Douglas Keen some of his *EAGLE* 'Road of Courage' and he was soon working for them, though not on his hoped-for book. Later came Frank Humphris, who stayed in the *EAGLE*'s eyrie to the end. He also produced excellent Ladybird books. One day, I took my latest set of drawings to the editor's house, in Stratford-upon-Avon, where we always met up, to find the whole family out on the lawn. There was Frank, dressed in chaps and ten-gallon hat? demonstrating his 'lightning draw'. And it really was a lightning draw, with two whopping heavy Colts. (He had a method of testing our reaction and won every time).

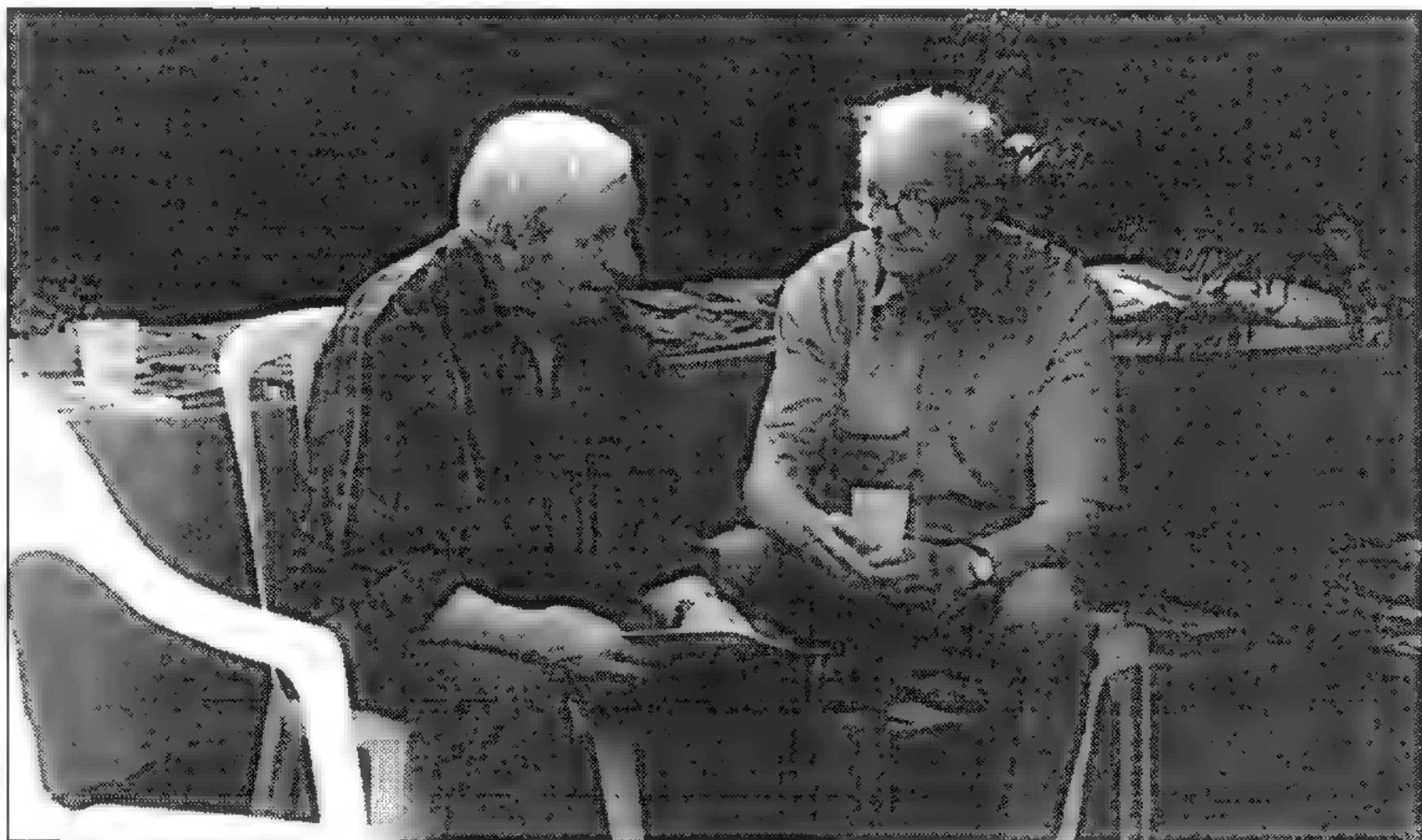
In 1973 Ladybird, now swallowed by Longman, with a new editor (Vernon Mills, who moved the 'image' of Ladybird books forward very successfully) asked if I would mind going to the West Indies to get local colour and take reference photographs for a W.I. version of the Reading Scheme, with Ken and Joy replacing Peter and Jane. Well, of course I *didn't* mind, and went out, first to Trinidad, then Jamaica and finally the Bahamas (Nassau). This was a great experience, but hard work, plodding the hot streets and parks,

zoos and beaches, and also being conducted round schools by a very friendly bunch of men and women in each island. One told me "Once you have had the sand of the West Indies between your toes, you are certain to return." Like many old saws however, there was no truth in it and I never went again, though treasuring the memories. The six books were called 'Sunstart'. There had been a misunderstanding about the number of schools out there and it was not a financial success.

I had some distinguished authors: L. du Garde Peach, who did 'History of the Theatre', and, surprisingly, four Sci Fi books written by no less than Fred Hoyle, the late distinguished astronomer and scientist, assisted by his son Geoffrey. These books introduced his theories such as our microbes coming to us from outer space, disguised in a suitable children's story.

I was 24 years with Ladybird and about seventy books to my name. After that, I suppose they had different ideas about the style of work they wanted. Things move on, including me. I continued illustrating with various publishers until about 1996, then called it a day.

I now concentrate on painting; portraits mostly. My one venture into the Press World now is 'Justin Tyme', with Flossie and Bobbin, for our very own *EAGLE* Times. A return home as it were, in my dotage. □



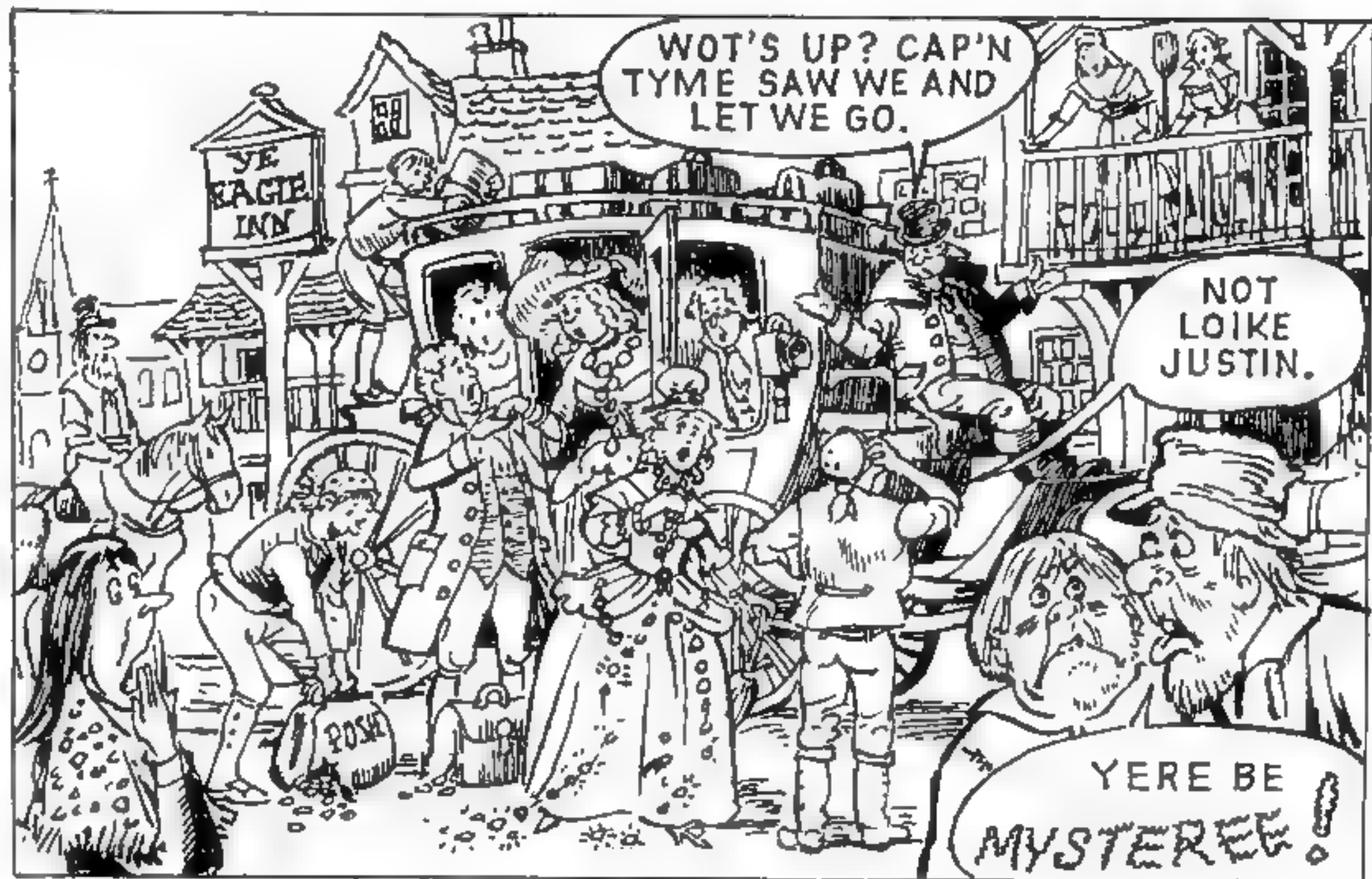
Don Harley and Martin at the 2001 Eagle Society garden party

Justin Tyme -



Script by Geoffrey Bond and * Martin

YE HAPLESS HIGHWAYMAN



Riders of the Range - the Radio Series

by Cowhand Horn

Part 3 - Billy the Kid

Having reached Denver, Colorado, with a herd of cattle and having successfully sold them in the second radio series, the 6T6 outfit set off for home, their ranch in Pecos, Texas, in the first episode of the third series.

They ride along the "Goodnight Loving" trail and as they enter New Mexico they make a sad discovery. A lonely ranch house has been attacked and set on fire by Apache Indians and all that remains standing is a small barn. Rustler seems very interested in the barn and when Jeff goes to see what is interesting the dog so much, he finds a baby hidden behind bales of grass. The bodies of the parents are found and the cowboys have no option but to ride to the nearest town with the infant. Las Vegas is the nearest town and so the men ride there with the child. They find the Sheriff, whose wife offers to look after the child until relatives can be found.

As the news gets around town a collection is organised for the baby and the townsfolk are very generous, resulting in quite a sum for the orphan. Jeff, Luke and Cal ride to the bank with the money but as they arrive a robbery is in progress. A gun battle ensues; one bandit is killed, two others captured and the rest escape with a hastily formed posse in pursuit. The trail leads to the hills and after a while the posse have to admit they have lost the bandits; but Cal's daughter Mary, riding alone, stumbles on the bandit's hideout and is captured. The posse, on their way back to town, also stumble on the gang's position and a gun battle rages.

Outgunned and outmanned, the gang are soon captured, but their leader escapes. His name is William H. Bonney!

Back in Las Vegas, the 6T6 men are obliged to stay in the town pending the trial of the bank robbers. With time on their hands, the cowboys decide to enter the Stompede, a contest of riding, bronco busting, and shooting. One of the events is a horse race with a prize of \$500 on offer and several of Cal's men enter. Luke enters on Betsy, Cal on Wall Eye and Bob enters on Jeff's horse, Dunny, as his own horse is lame.

The horse race starts outside the town at a place called Wagon Wheel Valley and its course takes the riders through the town centre, a fact that

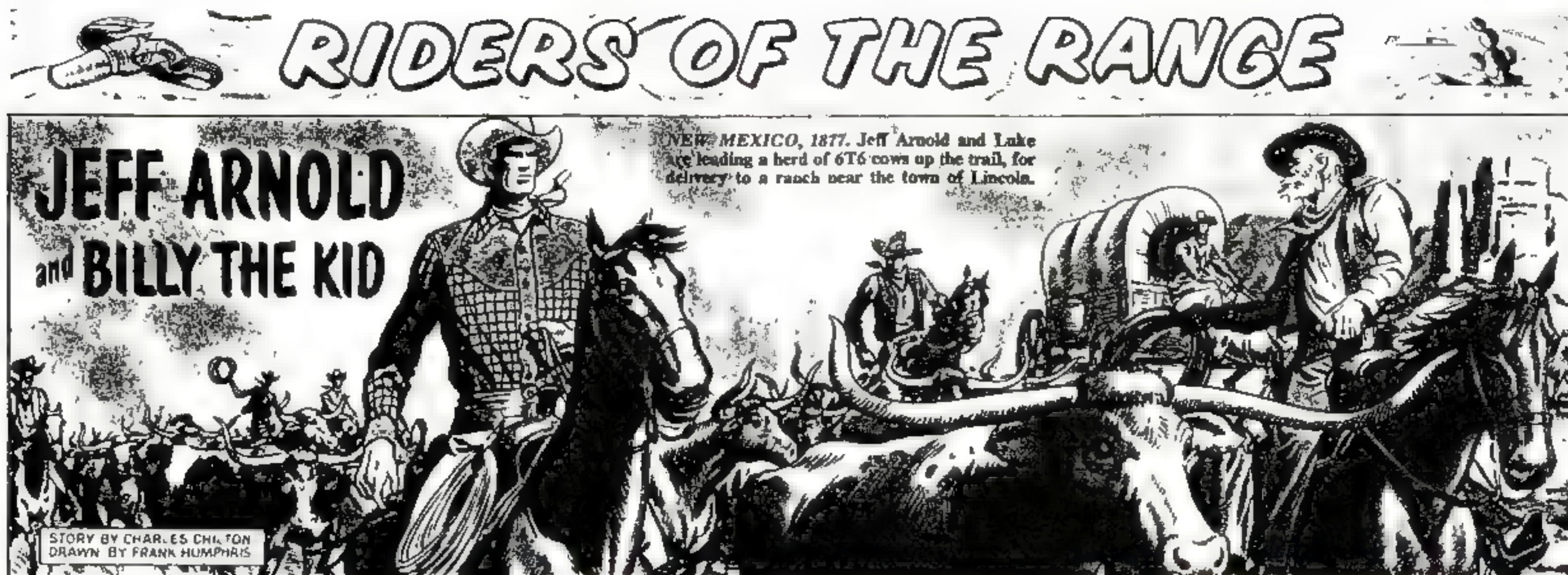


Bonney knows and is thus able to free his gang members from jail. As 110 riders charge through the town Billy springs the gang and, with horses waiting outside the jail, they escape, looking like contestants in the race.

When the race is over and Jeff learns of the jailbreak, he decides to go after them with a posse but this plan is abandoned after Buster Carter, trail boss of the Lazy Y outfit, Texas, rides into town and tells Jeff of massive rustling problems back home. He advises a quick return or they may find they have no cattle on arriving home.

Cal takes the advice and his men set off for Texas; reaching the state border one night a week later. They set up camp (good excuse for a sing-song) and the cowboys retire to their bed rolls. Bob is first up and prepares breakfast but from Luke he is told that Cal and Jeff have ridden off earlier as during the early hours of the morning a herd of cattle was heard being driven by some miles away.

After breakfast Luke gathers some men together and they ride off in the direction that Cal and Jeff took. Several miles across the prairie Luke and his cowboys come across the two men looking down on a resting herd of cattle and when the time is right they ride down from their hiding place and recapture the stolen herd, running the rustlers off. From the brands on the animals they discover that the cattle belong to Cal's neighbour, Jack Wilson, and the herd is returned to the Lazy Y Ranch. When they arrive they find the place empty and so decide to bed down for the night



The Eagle story of "Billy the Kid" started half way through the radio story.

(good excuse for a song) and some hours later Wilson and his men show up, having been riding the range looking for the stolen cattle. Jack is delighted to see the herd back and invites the 6T6 to spend the night in the ranch house (more songs).

Just before dawn, Charlie, one of Wilson's men, rides in to say that K.C. Miller, who had recently stolen cattle from the Lazy Y, and Wilson, in retaliation, had stolen from Miller the same amount, was riding over, intent on trouble. But Miller reckoned without the 6T6 men being there and is soon sent packing.

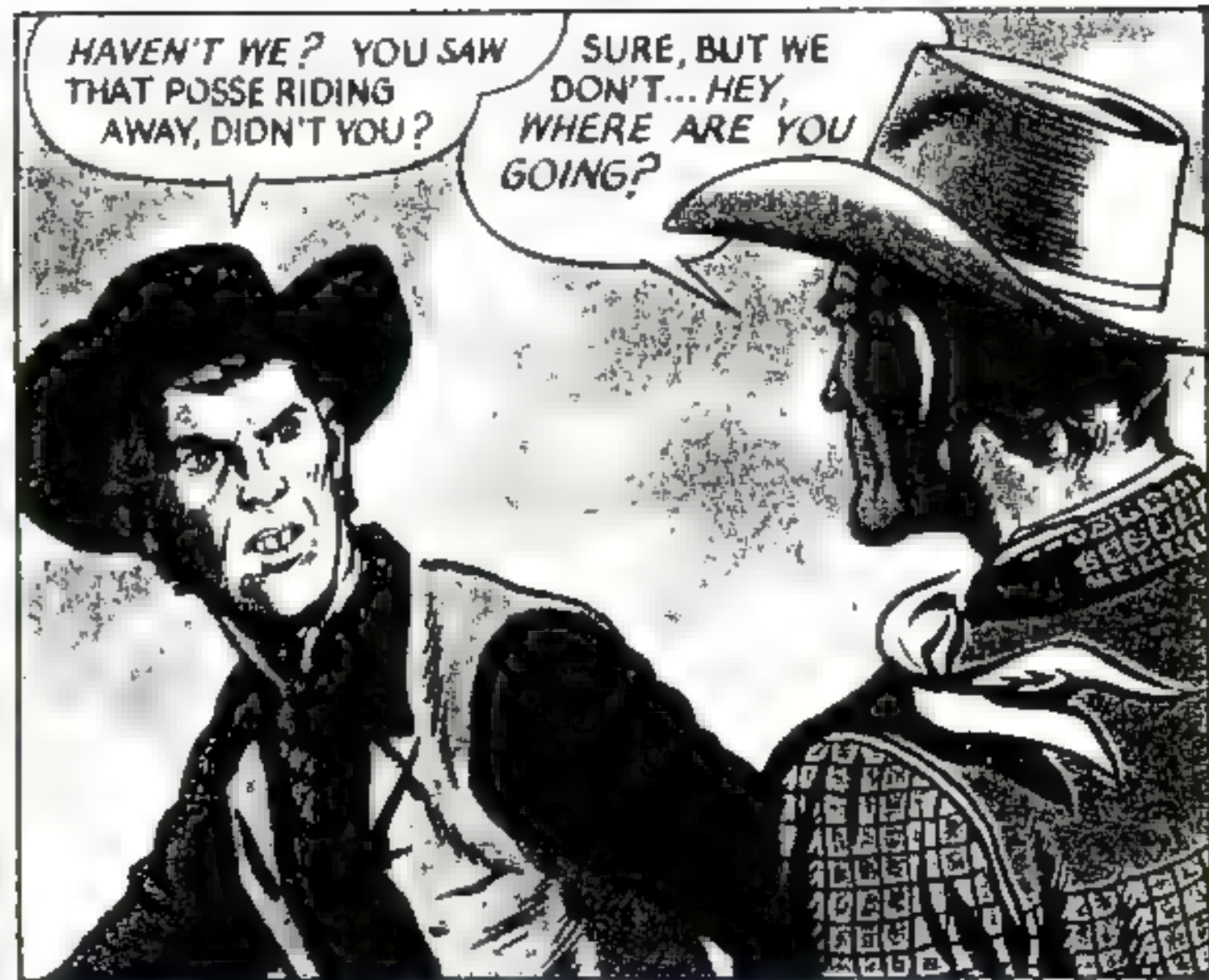
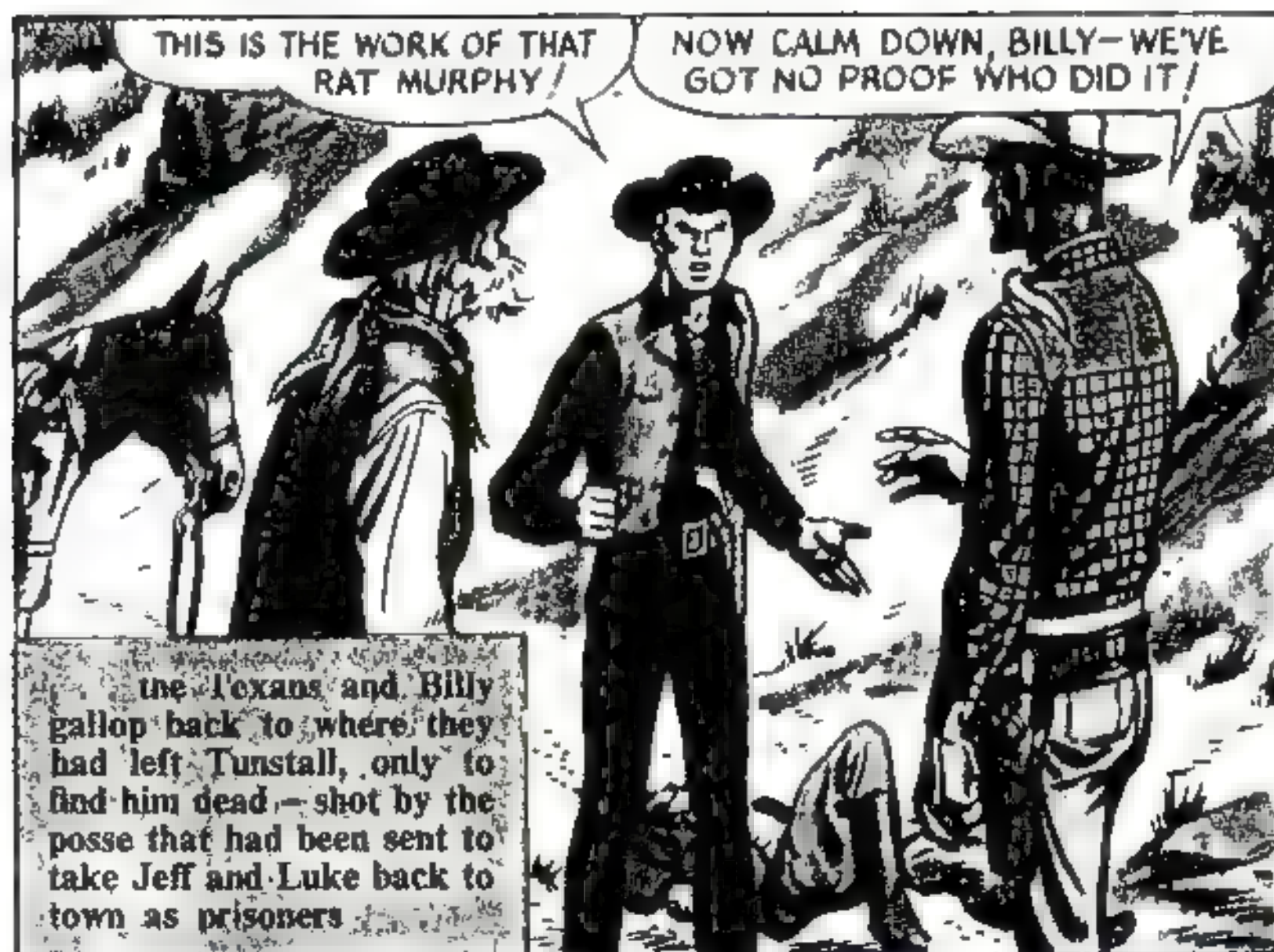
When the 6T6 men do arrive back at their own ranch, they find cattle missing, and the ranch house raided just as they had been warned in Las Vegas. The mess is cleared up (with a few songs) and the plains covered for straying cattle which takes a month with all the totalling up. Cal calculates he has lost 1,900 head of cattle, a loss of around \$42,000!

A sing-song around the fire one night is interrupted by a blood-splattered lone rider who almost collapses from his horse, exhausted, as he enters the camp. After assistance from Mary the rider explains he has been attacked by Indians on his way from John Chisum, the owner of the famous South Spring Ranch in Lincoln County, New Mexico. Lawlessness is rife and cattle rustling is the main criminal activity so Chisum is asking for McCord's help.

Episode 9 sees Jeff, Bob and Luke riding over to Lincoln County to see Chisum and en route they see a herd of cattle in the distance and ride to it to see if any of the beasts have the 6T6 brand on them. As they study the animals they are seen by Chisum's men, who ride over and accuse them of stealing cattle.

Unaware of what is happening on the range, Cal and his men go straight to the South Spring Ranch, meet the big cattle man and gratefully accept his hospitality. The drinking and socialising comes to an abrupt end when Jeff and friends are herded into the great dining room. The mistake is sorted out and, with more drinks, another opportunity to sing some more songs comes about. During the sing-song, Chisum takes Cal to one side and tells him he is expecting another rancher to join them, by the name of J.H. Tunstall, an English cattle owner who is also suffering from the lawlessness in the county. A little while later Tunstall shows up but who should arrive with him but Billy the Kid. Jeff springs up to arrest the kid but is told to 'hold his horses' while they all talk about the Lincoln County problems. Chisum explains that they want all the manpower they can get to oppose Major Murphy, one of the biggest corrupt cattlemen in the area. Murphy has a partner, a man called Dolan, who is also to be considered as a major criminal.

Next day Tunstall, Billy, Jeff and Luke ride into Lincoln as the Englishman has an appointment with his lawyer. En route, they see some wild turkeys on the hillside and Luke suggests they go on a turkey hunt. Tunstall makes his apologies and leaves the three men to go on their hunt, and rides into town on his own, coming across a group of men from Murphy's gang. In cold blood he is shot dead! Later the turkey hunters ride into town and find Tunstall's body. Billy is devastated as he had a good relationship with the rancher. He vows to shoot everyone connected with the killing!



After the shooting of his friend, J.H. Tunstall, an English cattle man, Billy vows to shoot all members of Major Murphy's posse that carried out the murder.

A hoe-down is in progress at Chisum's ranch when Jeff and friends come in to tell of Tunstall's death. Talks take place from then on to see how the murderers can be brought to justice and plans are made.

The following day, Chisum's men and McCord's men join up and they set out for Lincoln. Two of Murphy's men are caught and taken to South Springs but when Murphy finds out he sends out a posse headed by Jesse Evans to the ranch in an effort to free his men. The episode ends with Jeff and company preparing for a siege at the ranch.

Next week's episode starts with plenty of gunfire around South Springs and Evans and his men go into retreat. Jeff then decides to take the two prisoners, Morton and Baker, into Lincoln and horses are prepared. As they approach the town something frightens the horses of the two prisoners and they start bucking and rearing. Thinking this is a plan to escape, Billy shoots both men dead, much to Jeff and Luke's dismay.

Murphy tries to get Jeff, Luke and Billy arrested for the murder of the two men and they manage to reach the relative safety of lawyer Alex McSween, who was looking after Tunstall's affairs. Some of Billy's Mexican friends, learning of the situation, manage to creep into the house at night to give further gun power to the inhabitants. The shooting starts next morning! Meanwhile McCord and some of his men ride over to Fort Stanton to seek help with the worsening crisis in Lincoln.

The Siege at McSween's lasts three days and on the third night someone sets the house on fire.

Inside, the inhabitants know they must make a run for it, guns ablazing. McSween, a pacifist, says he has never carried a gun and will walk out carrying only a bible. Mrs McSween is allowed to leave unharmed, but McSween is shot down as he calmly walks out. Others make a dash for it but feel the hot lead of the Murphy guns. With only Billy, Jeff and Luke left in the burning hulk they make a dash for it and amazingly make it to some bushes and escape!

They reach the Bonito River on foot and after walking all night reach a ranch owned by a friend of Billy's, Nicholeita Pacheco. Nicky gives them food and fresh horses and they set off for the hills.

Meanwhile, Cal returns from the fort and with Rustler's help they search for Jeff and his two companions. Riding along they come across Nicky's brother, badly wounded, and take him back to his sister's house. As episode 14 ends, Murphy's men are seen riding toward the house.

Murphy's men prove to be cowardly as episode 15 starts with a gun battle. They have no stomach for a good fight and retreat. Back in the hills, Jeff, Luke and Billy find themselves pursued by a posse led by Robert Ollinger, and after quite a chase Ollinger captures the trio at Sierra Capitana. However, thanks to the tracking of Rustler, the 6T6 men are able to free Jeff and friends and they make their way back to Chisum's ranch. Before they arrive, Billy is really smarting from everything that has happened and breaks away from the riders vowing to seek out Murphy's men and shoot them.

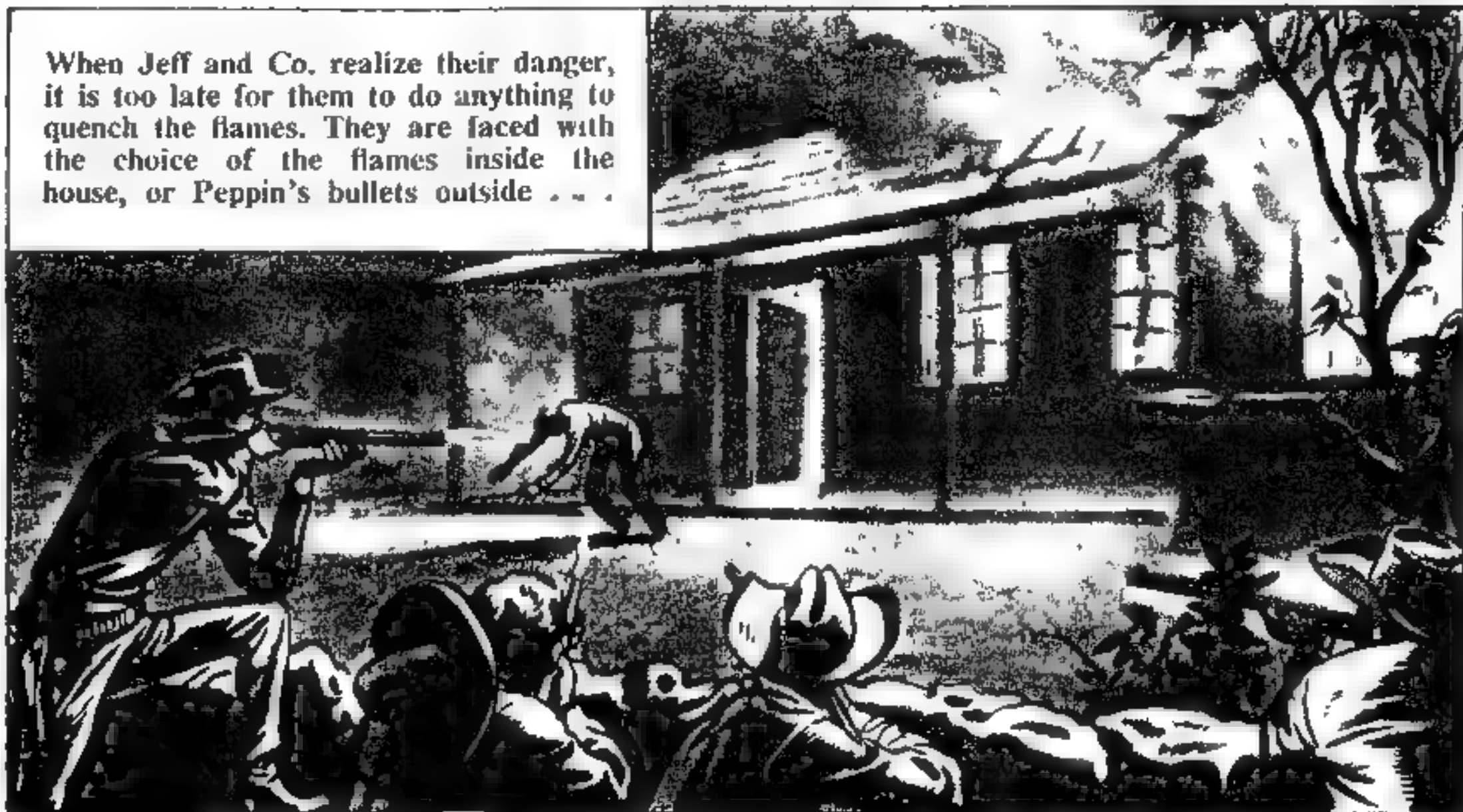
Continued

JEFF ARNOLD and BILLY THE KID

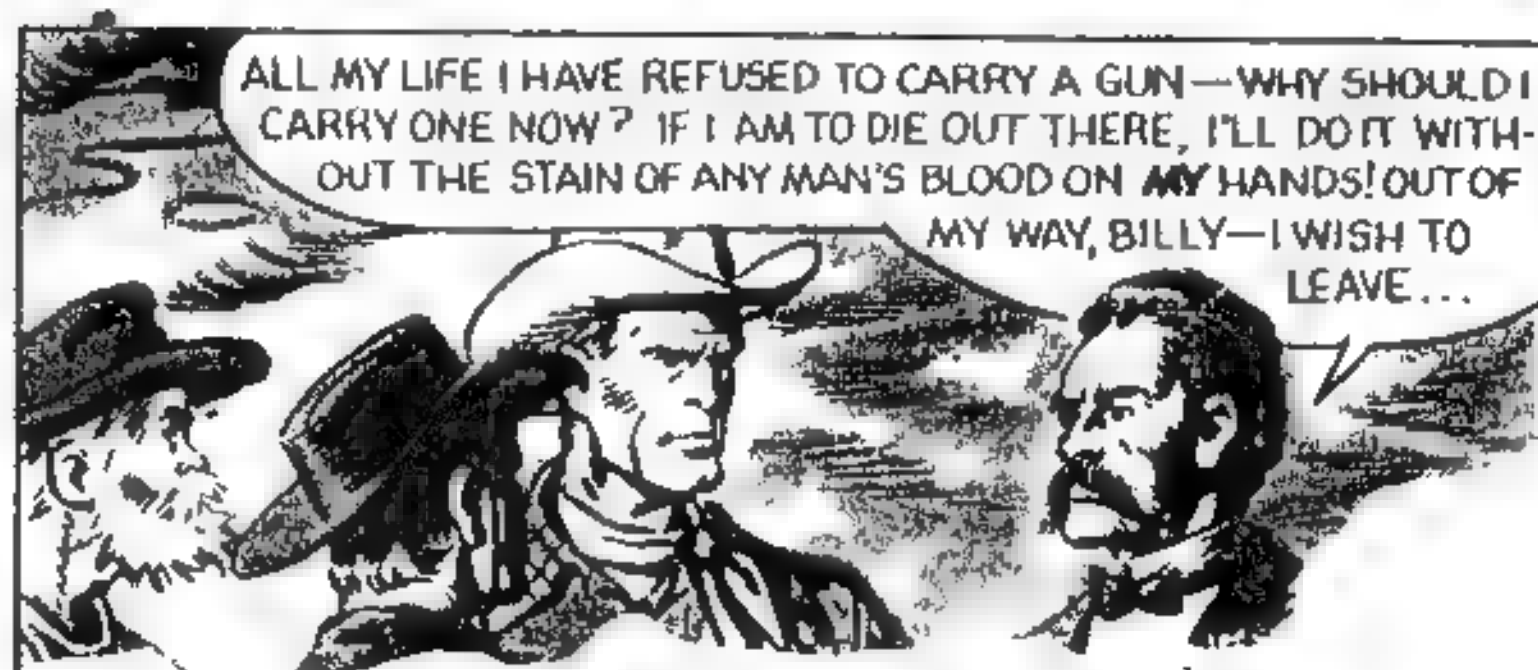
Jeff, Billy the Kid, Luke, and some of Chisholm's vaqueros, are in Lawyer McSween's house at Lincoln, New Mexico. They have been surrounded by 'Dad' Peppin's posse, intent on arresting Billy, and only Mrs McSween has been allowed to leave. Peppin - backed by supporters of cattle-rustling Major Murphy, by whom he was appointed Sheriff - orders his men to open fire. During a truce, Peppin's men set light to the house.

STORY BY CHARLES CHILTON
DRAWN BY FRANK HUMPHRIS

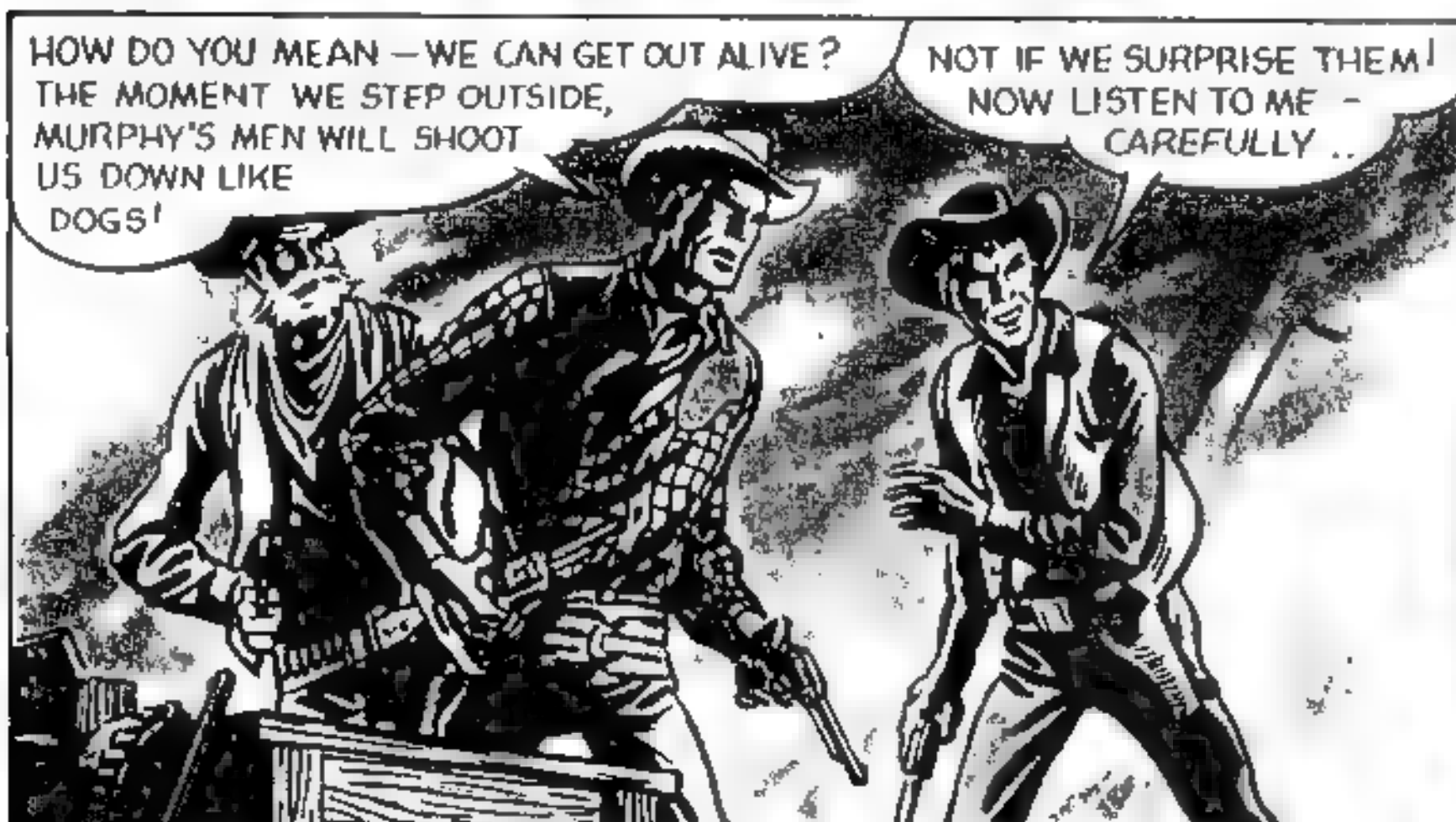
When Jeff and Co. realize their danger, it is too late for them to do anything to quench the flames. They are faced with the choice of the flames inside the house, or Peppin's bullets outside . . .



KEEP A HOLD ON THIS - AT LEAST YOU MIGHT TAKE A COUPLE OF THOSE VARMINTS WITH YOU IF YOU DIE!

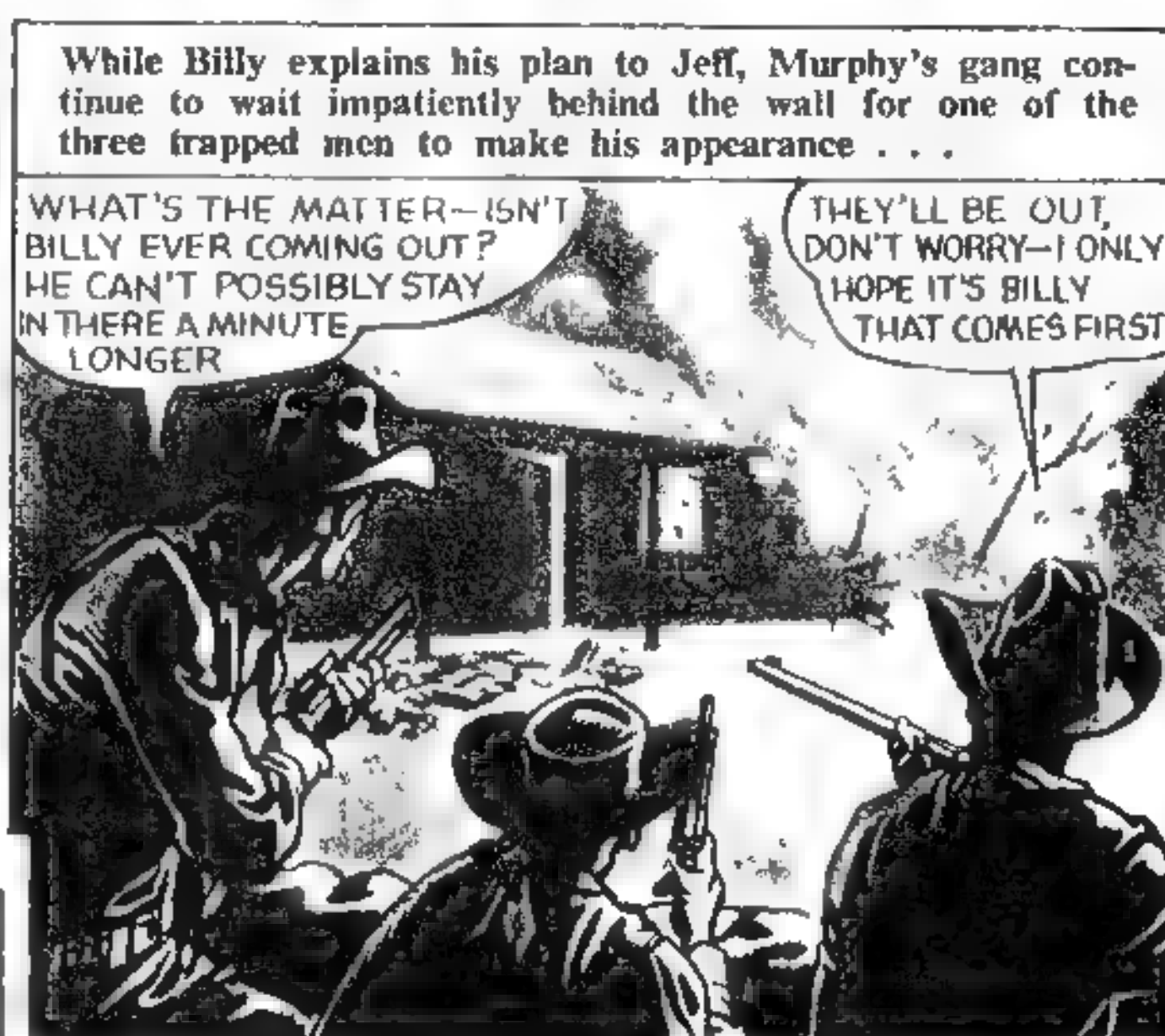


ALL MY LIFE I HAVE REFUSED TO CARRY A GUN - WHY SHOULD I CARRY ONE NOW? IF I AM TO DIE OUT THERE, I'LL DO IT WITHOUT THE STAIN OF ANY MAN'S BLOOD ON MY HANDS! OUT OF MY WAY, BILLY - I WISH TO LEAVE...



HOW DO YOU MEAN - WE CAN GET OUT ALIVE? THE MOMENT WE STEP OUTSIDE, MURPHY'S MEN WILL SHOOT US DOWN LIKE DOGS!

NOT IF WE SURPRISE THEM! NOW LISTEN TO ME - CAREFULLY...



While Billy explains his plan to Jeff, Murphy's gang continue to wait impatiently behind the wall for one of the three trapped men to make his appearance . . .

WHAT'S THE MATTER - ISN'T BILLY EVER COMING OUT? HE CAN'T POSSIBLY STAY IN THERE A MINUTE LONGER

THEY'LL BE OUT, DON'T WORRY - I ONLY HOPE IT'S BILLY THAT COMES FIRST!

But instead of coming out singly, the three men make a dash together, firing at the places from which tell-tale flashes have given away the positions of Peppin's gunmen . . .



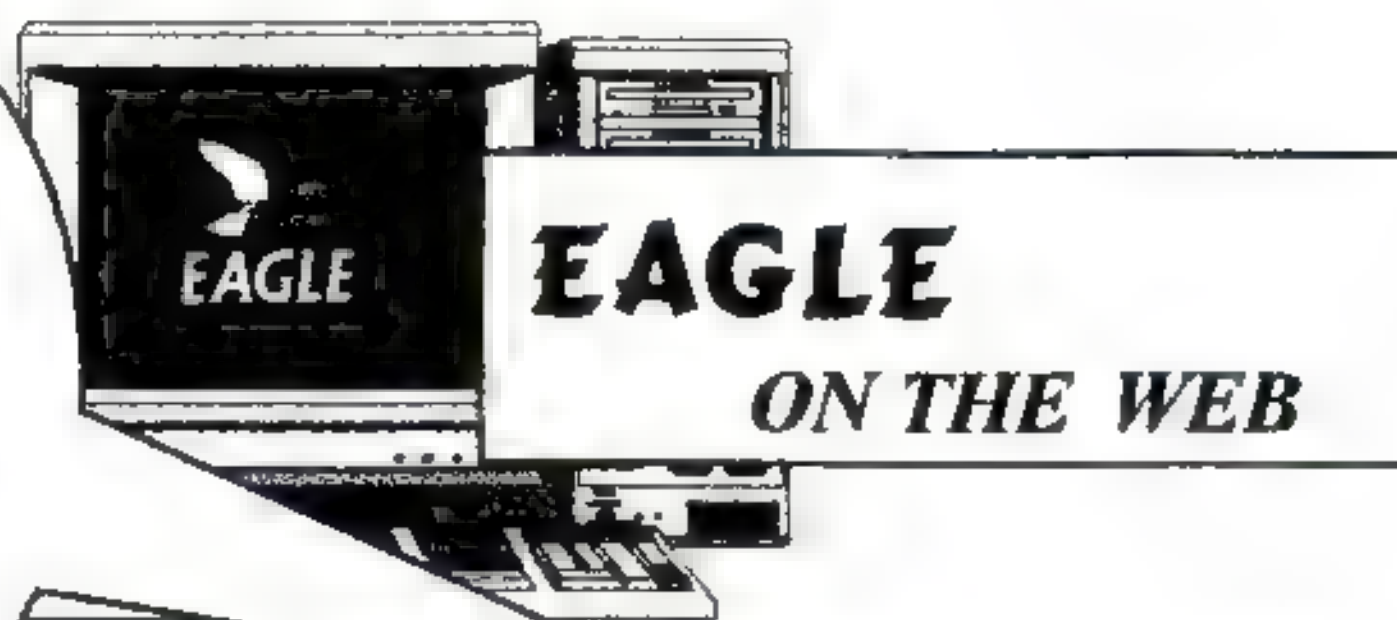
HERE THEY COME... AUCH!



LOOKS AS IF WE'VE MADE IT - HEAD STRAIGHT FOR THE RIVER!

The siege at McSween's

With the new Eagle Exhibition opening on 27th September it has been very busy period! This month I have had time to do only one page dedicated to the Internet, but there are some very interesting topics!



by David Britton

Have you been "wapped" yet?

If so, the following announcement from Peter Inns will be of interest.

A mini-version of the Dan-Dare.net website is now available wirelessly via WAP. You can either access it through your WAP-enabled device by going to: <http://www.dan-dare.net/index.wml> in your WAP browser, or by visiting the main website and clicking on the link within the "NEW!" banner to launch a WAPbrowser emulator that runs the WAPsite. *It's great site, check it out!*

Après Hawk - le deluge?

Amazon Books has announced that Titan is publishing the First Venus Story.

The planned release date was announced as "October 2003" and they were taking advance orders. Priced at the discounted rate of £13.95 it offers a significant challenge to the current Hawk volume No.1 that has been achieving prices in the range of £30 -£60 depending on whether in paperback or hardcover, condition and the day of the auction. Until the announcement, prices have remained strong, but the appearance of the first of what may prove to be a new series has undermined the market (much to the relief of potential buyers). Fearing they may miss the buoyant conditions, a number of people have started to sell their copies. However, the release date has been put back to January 2004 (no surprise to those hardened to the frequent disappointments of anything connected to Dan Dare films, books, stories and merchandise) and is now offered at the discounted rate of £14.06. As this is a Sterling equivalent it would seem that target market may be the U.S.A as it is priced in US dollars at \$24.95. *We shall see!*



From what we can glean, the book will be around 160 pages printed from the original magazines and will be a smaller format than either the weekly or Hawk Books publications. Check out Amazon to pre-order, perhaps they are assessing the demand and will only publish if they consider it to be large enough.

Dan Dare – The TV Series.

For more information, see the Larry Schultz (graphic designer and animator for the project) site at: http://www.splinegod.com/dan_dare.htm

And finally.... Yahoo membership reached 126 and stands currently at 121.

There have been some very heated debates recently. Feeling feisty? Have an opinion? Then why not join the club. **BE WARNED!** You could be expelled!

Back to 2 pages in the Xmas issue (☺) ... Any comments? Contact me.

davidbritton@compuserve.com

The Clevedon Dan Dare Cards

by Howard Corn

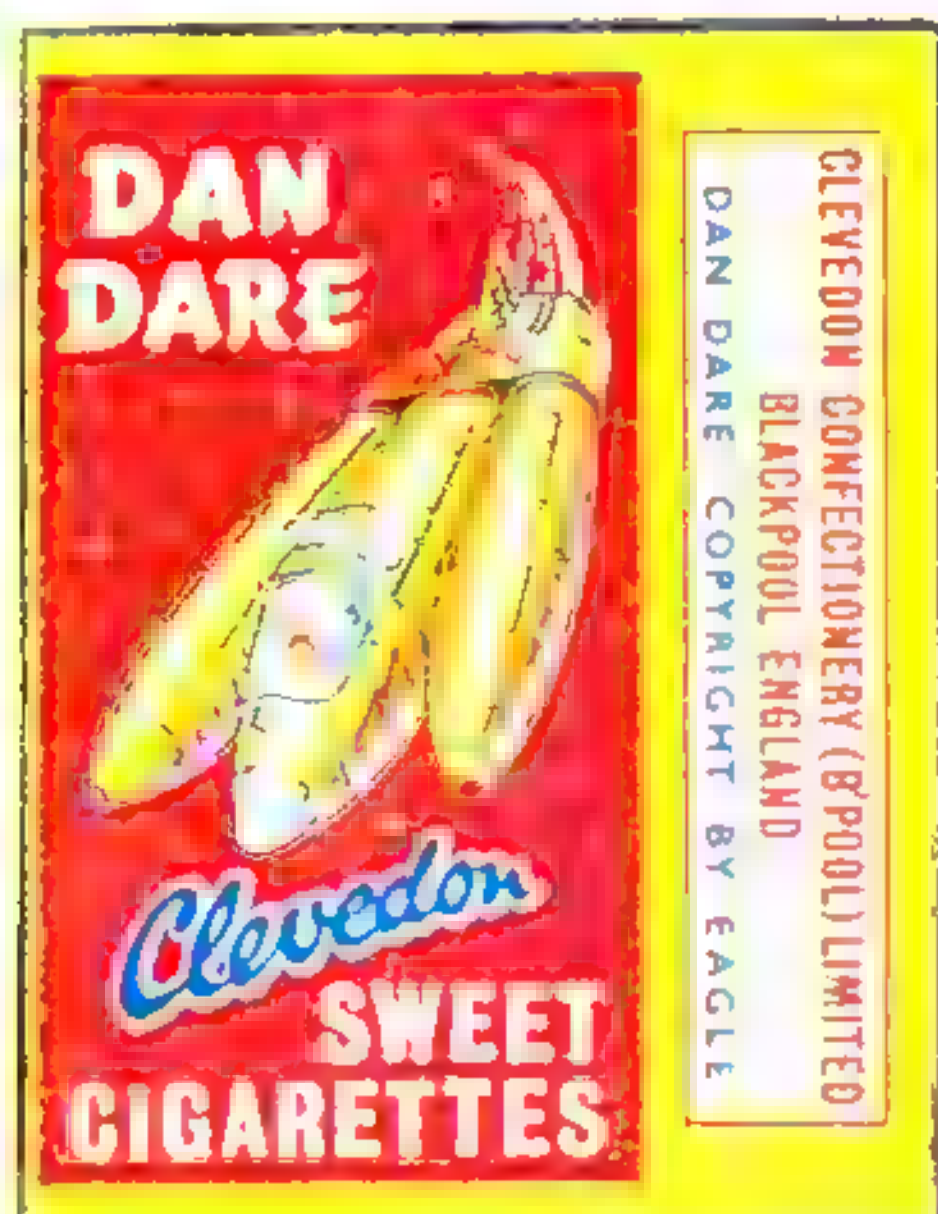
In 1958 Clevedon Confectionery Ltd, of Blackpool, decided to put cards into their sweet packets. This policy lasted for five years and a run of 22 sets was published during this time, with subjects such as trains, ships, aircraft and sportsmen. In 1961 they produced a set of Dan Dare cards.

The artwork on Clevedon's cards left a lot to be desired and sadly the Dan Dare cards followed the same pattern of poor illustration. Compared to the Calvert Toothpaste Dan Dare Cards they are very inferior. Calvert Cards were bright, well drawn and came up to a standard that I'm sure Frank Hampson would have approved of. I don't think he would have liked the 1961 set.

However, today the Clevedon cards are very rare and prices are twice as high as those for the toothpaste cards. In the Murray catalogue, they are listed at £6 each with the Calverts listed at £3. Should you try through Mr Murray, beware, for he has a nasty habit of charging TWICE the price for the first and last cards of the set, meaning that No.1 and 25 will set you back £12 a card. Other firms do not, including The London Cigarette Card Co. in Somerset.

The set shows characters from the late fifties Dan Dare stories such as 'The Phantom Fleet' and 'Safari in Space'. The Mekon is also included.

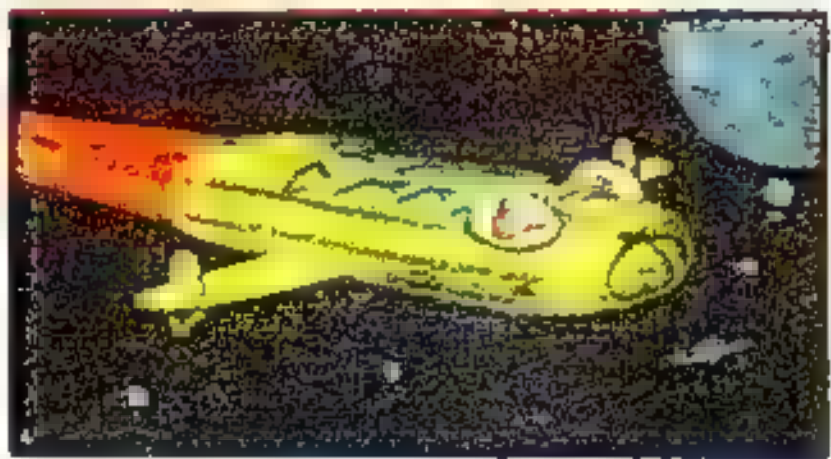
Our colour centre spread shows the set and I would have thought that an album was also available but to date I have never seen or heard of one. If anyone knows of an album, please let us know.



The cards shown on the next two pages are not numbered as they are on the back of the cards.

The key is as follows:

1. Anastasia
2. Prof. Jocelyn Peabody
3. Sir Hubert Guest
4. Dan Dare
5. Digby
6. Electro-Stunner Pistol
7. Pescod Craft
8. Flying Scooter
9. Stripey
10. Moon Jeep
11. The Cosmobes
12. Luna Bus
13. Troop Carrier
14. The Pescods
15. Flamer Spry
16. The Auto - Valet
17. The Flying Cutter
18. Lex O'Malley
19. Steve Valiant
20. Galileo McHoo
21. Heli-Jet
22. Selektrobot
23. Volstar
24. Red Rufus
25. The Mekon



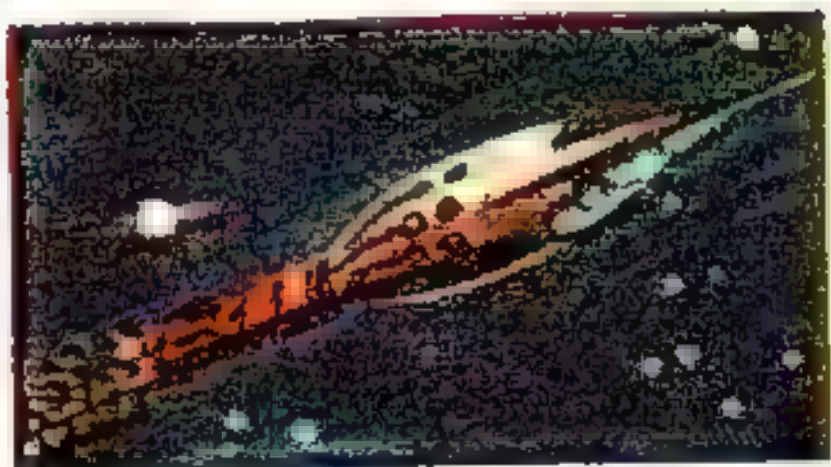
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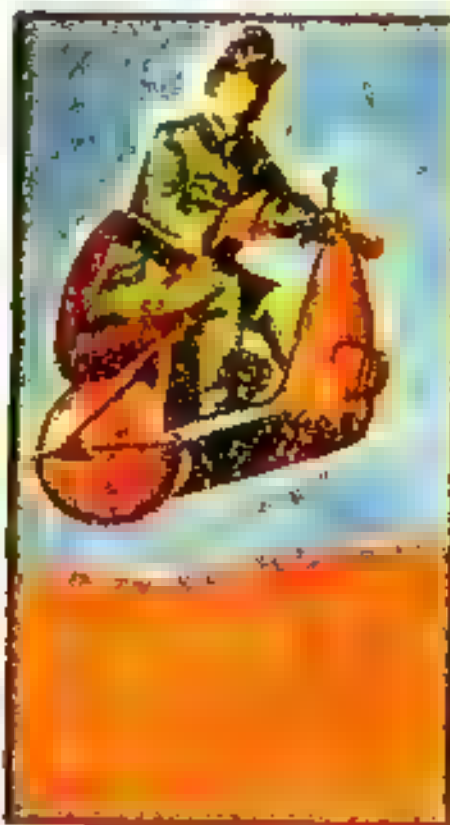
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7



8



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14



15



18



19



20



21



4



5



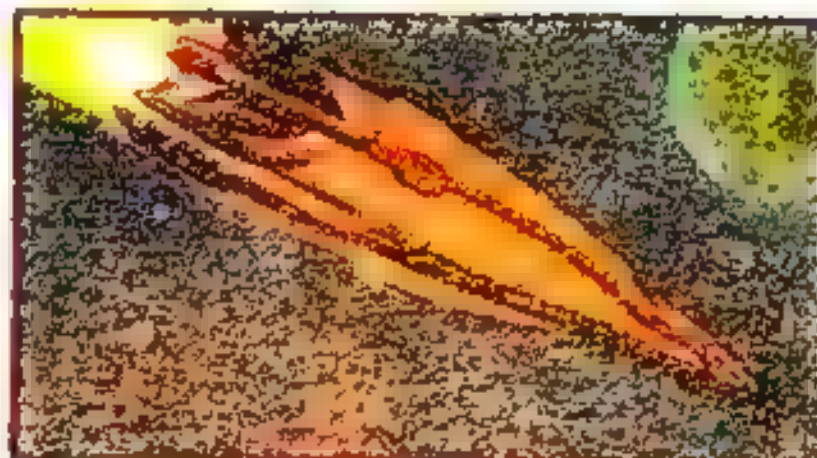
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16



17



22



23



24



25

Science Fiction on British Television in *EAGLE*'s Times

by Will Grenham

In this series of articles I have been reviewing the science fiction that was on British TV during the years of *EAGLE*'s publication. The series continues from 1964 through 1966.

Part 5

1964

The Crunch: A Nigel Kneale play, *The Crunch*, started ITV's *Studio '64* drama series on 19 January: the dictator of a former colony (Wolfe Morris) holds Britain to ransom with a nuclear device hidden in the Makangese Embassy.

The Outer Limits: 'There is nothing wrong with your television set. Do not attempt to adjust the picture. We are controlling the transmission....' *The Outer Limits* has been described as 'The Bug-Eyed Monster show.' Among the noted directors of this US SF anthology was Byron Haskin (director of the movies *War of the Worlds* and *Conquest of Space*). By the time of its first UK transmission in April, in *EAGLE*, Dan Dare's *The Big City Caper* had begun.

The Caves of Steel: On 21 April, BBC2 was launched, and on 5 June the new channel made its first foray into SF. *The Caves of Steel* was adapted by Terry Nation from the novel by Isaac Asimov, and directed by Peter Sasdy.

In *The Caves of Steel* Elijah Baley (Peter Cushing) is Deputy Police Commissioner in a future New York - 14 million people under a vast dome



The Mekon contemplates escape

that protects them from the countryside outside. Scientists from other worlds study a subjugated human race, hoping to save it from self-extinction. One of the alien scientists is murdered. Baley is assigned to the case, with detective R. (for 'Robot') Daniel Olivaw (John Carson).

In *EAGLE* that week the Mekon was on trial, but was thinking about escape at the start of *All Treens Must Die!*

Stingray: On 4 October, Gerry Anderson's third Supermarionation series began on ITV.

The atomic-powered submarine, *Stingray*, is the key asset of the World Aquanaut Security Patrol (WASP). Its crew are Captain Troy Tempest, and Lt. George 'Phones' Sheridan. In the first episode Troy and Phones rescue the mute Marina from Titan, the evil ruler of Titanica, and she joins their crew. In ensuing adventures they combat threats from extra-terrestrials, foreign powers and monsters from the deep.



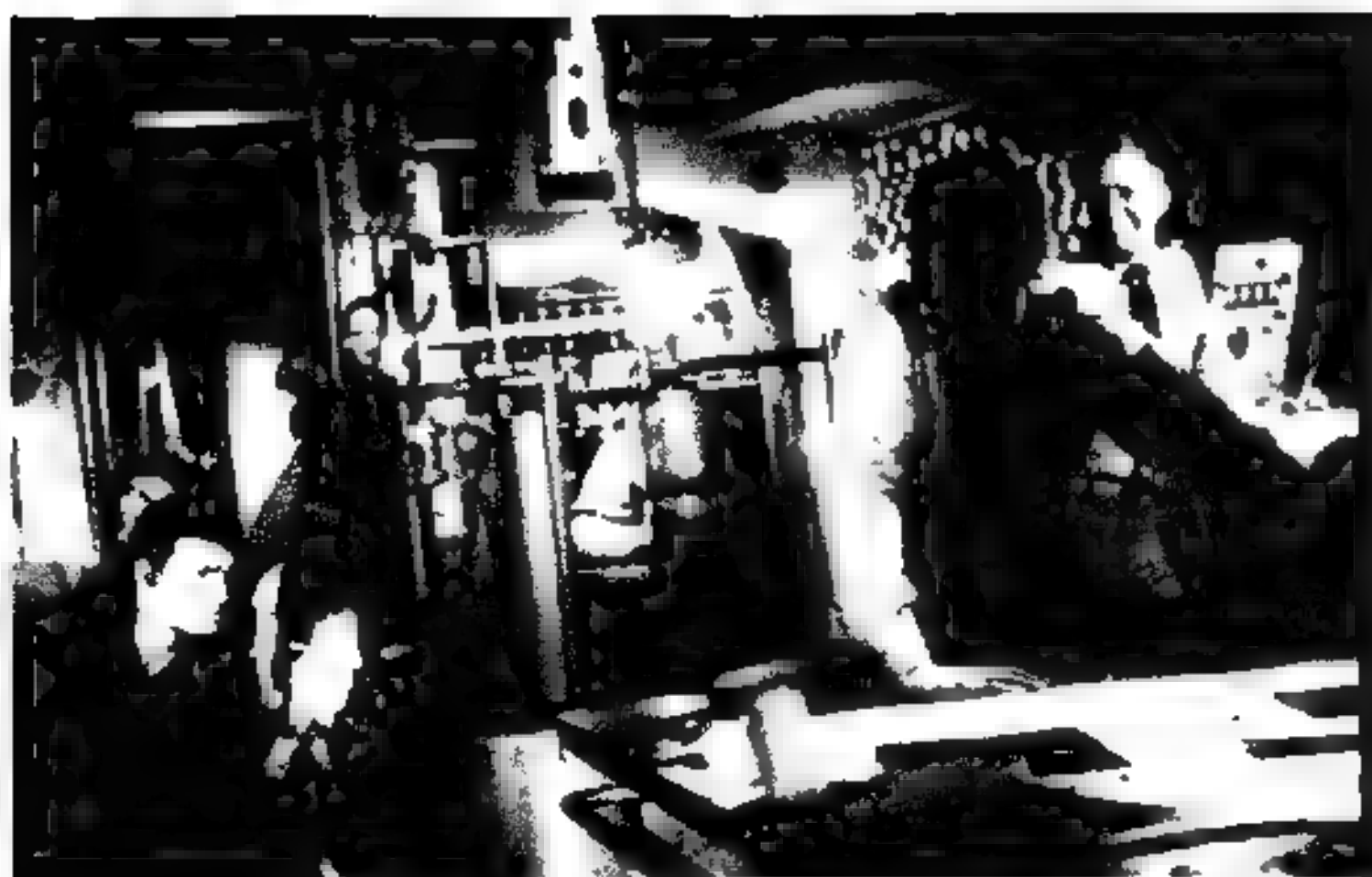
Stingray

From January 1965 a *Stingray* comic strip appeared in the newly launched *TV Century 21*, drawn by Ron Embleton.

Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea: While Anderson was busy making *Stingray*, across the Atlantic producer Irwin Allen was making a different submarine adventure series, which first



The Caves of Steel



All aboard the Seaview

aired in Britain on 10 October. *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea* was a 'spin-off' from Allen's 1961 movie of the same name. The submarine in *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea* is the 600-foot atomic-powered 'Seaview'. Her skipper is Admiral Harriman Nelson (Richard Basehart). While ostensibly undertaking scientific research, the crew combat threats from extra-terrestrials, foreign powers and monsters from the deep (much like *Stingray*, without the strings!).

Dr Who (Season 2): The previous year had ended, for watchers of BBC's *Doctor Who*, with The Doctor pitted against the Daleks. The first season continued until 2 September with various stories based in Earth history or in outer space. The second season began on 31 October, a week after the *Dan Dare* adventure, *The Mushroom*, began in *EAGLE*. On 21 November the Daleks returned in *The Dalek Invasion of Earth*.



Look out London – the Daleks have invaded

In 1965, the Daleks provided another TV-to-comics 'spin-off' in *TV Century 21*, drawn by *EAGLE* artist **Richard Jennings** and Ron Turner.

R3: In the BBC's *R3*, created by N. J. Crisp, 'R3' is Research Ministry Centre Number 3, headed by Sir Michael Gerrard (John Robinson, Prof. Quatermass of *Quatermass II*). The series covered a number of themes: space-research, human guinea pigs, drug safety, etc, but its focus was on the scientists' lives and interactions. The first season ran from 20 November to 13 February. As it concluded,



Dan and Dig wait for Sir Hubert

The Moonsleepers began in *EAGLE*. With Xel imprisoned, Dan and Digby awaited the arrival of Sir Hubert, to celebrate the publication of his memoirs – not knowing that he had gone missing.

1965

Campaign for One: The BBC's *The Wednesday Play* on 3 March was *Campaign for One*, a 'psychiatric thriller'. A British astronaut, Sqn Ldr Osborne (Barry Foster), suffers a spacecraft malfunction. Faced with flying manually to Earth, he decides he might not return at all. After broadcasting jokes and military secrets he unloads his worries to a psychiatrist, who reveals the cause for Osborne's 'opting out' - sexual inadequacy.

Undermind: A memorable serial began on ITV from 8 May to 17 July (when *The Moonsleepers* ended). In *Undermind*, personnel officer Drew Herriot (Jeremy Wilkin) finds his brother Frank (Jeremy Kemp) has caused a political scandal. Frank is one of a number of cases susceptible to high frequency signals. Over eleven episodes, it is revealed that extraterrestrial aliens transmitting from space are trying to undermine society.



Undermind

The Man from U.N.C.L.E.: A spy series with escapist SF elements started on BBC on 24 June. Napoleon Solo (Robert Vaughn) and Illya Kuryakin (David McCallum) are agents of the United Network Command for Law Enforcement (U.N.C.L.E.), pitted against 'THRUSH,' an organisation bent on world domination.

In *EAGLE* *The Moonsleepers* was drawing to a close, as Xel's invasion fleet headed towards Earth. *The Singing Scourge* began on 24 July.

Doctor Who (Season 3): On 11 September, the third season of *Doctor Who* began on BBC1.



Steed and Cathy Gale – *The Avengers*

The Avengers (Fourth season): On 28 September, *The Avengers* began its fourth season on ITV. Out went Cathy Gale (Honor Blackman) and in came Mrs Emma Peel (Diana Rigg). The plots became even more fantastic. A particularly memorable episode is *The Cybernauts*. Following the violent deaths of a number of executives, Steed (Patrick MacNee) and Mrs Peel meet Dr Armstrong (Michael Gough) who controls an army of deadly robots from his wheelchair.

Lost in Space: With *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea* still in production, Irwin Allen turned to space. *Lost in Space*, which made its UK premiere on 2 October, took the 'Swiss Family Robinson' idea out of this world. The 'Space Family' is: Professor John Robinson, (Guy Williams), Maureen, (June Lockhart), Judy (Marta Kristen), Penny (Angela Cartwright) and Will (Billy Mumy).



Smith, Will and the robot

In the opening episode, the Robinsons are chosen for a five and a half year journey on the spaceship 'Jupiter 2,' with pilot Major Don West (Mark Goddard). An enemy agent, Dr Zachary

Smith (Jonathan Harris), sneaks on board, sabotages their robot (Bob May) and sends the ship off course. In the process, Smith becomes trapped aboard. Subsequently, week-by-week the Robinsons endeavour to survive and to find a way to escape their travelling desert island, thwarted by circumstance and the self-serving Smith.

Thunderbirds: Also on 2 October, Gerry Anderson's fourth Supermarionation series made its debut. In it, Jeff Tracey sets up a family organisation, International Rescue, to combat emergencies anywhere: on land, or under it; on the sea, or under it; in the air, or in space. His four sons (John, Virgil, Alan, Gordon and Scott) provide the crew, backed up by the scientist 'Brains.' Because they not only come up against disaster, but also villains, who are trying to acquire their super technology, they have an agent, Lady Penelope, ably assisted by her manservant and chauffeur, Parker.

So successful was *Thunderbirds* that it spawned two Supermarionation movies, as well as comic strip adaptations. Lady Penelope appeared in her own comic strip in *TV Century 21* drawn by Eric Eden, and, later, a comic for girls (*Lady Penelope*). *Dan Dare* creator/artist Frank Hampson, was commissioned to provide a one-off *Lady Penelope* strip for the 1965 *TV Century 21* Summer Extra.



Hampson's Lady Penelope

From January 1966, the *Thunderbirds* comic strip appeared in its own right in *TV Century 21*, drawn by Frank Bellamy.



Thunderbird 1 – Bellamy style

Out of the Unknown: In 1962, Irene Shubik was Story Editor on the ITV SF anthology *Out of This World* (and previously, *Armchair Theatre*). Three years later, brought to the BBC by Sydney Newman, she was Producer and Story Editor on *Out of the Unknown*. Like *Out of This World*, the new anthology drew from the world's best SF published works, interspersed with original stories. Authors whose works were adapted in the first series, from 4 October to 20 December, included John Wyndham (*No Place Like Earth*), Isaac Asimov (*The Dead Past* and *Sucker Bait*), J.G. Ballard (*Thirteen to Centaurus*), Ray Bradbury (*The Fox and the Forest*) and John Brunner (*Some Lapse of Time*). The Designer on *Some Lapse of Time* was Ridley Scott (later Director of the SF movies *Alien* and *Blade Runner*).

The programmes were recorded prior to transmission, so many still exist. As part of a 'TV Sci Fi' season, the National Film Theatre recently showed *No Place Like Earth*. Of interest to *EAGLE* readers: among the cast was **Jessica Dunning** (Marcus Morris' wife).

Object Z: Appearing on ITV from 19 October was a new children's six-part serial, *Object Z*, written by Christopher McMaster, produced and directed by Daphne Shadwell.

A mysterious object, initially identified as a meteor, hurtles toward the Earth. World leaders and scientists join forces to determine whether aliens are coming, but it is revealed to be a giant hoax, perpetrated by Professor Ramsay (Ralph Nossek) to frighten the world into peace.

The Girl Who Loved Robots: One of the BBC's *Wednesday Play* series (20 October), *The Girl Who Loved Robots* was a futuristic murder story. The victim is a nightclub hostess, Victory Du Cann (Isobel Black). Inspector Antrobus (Dudley Foster) is prevented from arresting the culprit, an astronaut about to leave for the moon.

Nineteen Eighty-Four (2nd Production): In late 1965, BBC2 ran a series called *Theatre 625: The World George Orwell*. Rather than dusting off their 1954 telerecording of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* they decided to remake it, so Nigel Kneale updated his original script. The new production was transmitted on BBC2 on 28 November 1965, directed by Christopher Morahan. Winston Smith was played by David Buck, O'Brien by Joseph O'Connor and Julia by Jane Merrow. It did not attract the controversy of the earlier production.

The Master: The new year started well on ITV (11 January), with a six-part children's SF thriller, *The Master*, adapted by Rosemary Hill from a novel by T.H. White.

Marooned on the island of Rockall, two children, Nicky (Paul Guess) and Judy (Adrienne Posta), find a community lorded over by The Master (Olaf Pooley) - an evil, telepathic, mind-controlling, ancient despot. The Master is plotting to take over the world, targeting major cities with high-power lasers. Sensing that Nicky is also telepathic, The Master attempts to groom him as his successor, but Nicky, Judy, and Sqn Ldr Frinton (George Baker) thwart his plans.

At the beginning of February, *The Singing Scourge* came to an end in *EAGLE*, and *Give Me the Moon* began.

Object Z Returns: In the sequel to *Object Z*, shown on ITV from 22 February to 29 March, Professor Ramsay

(Ralph Nossek) is released from jail to find out if three new mysterious objects hurtling towards Earth are asteroids or space ships. This time the threat is real: aliens land in the oceans, and the world begins to freeze.

Batman: An import from the USA, *Batman* started on 21 May in the Northern ABC Television area. Adapted, of course, from the crime-fighting fantasy hero comic book, the 'goodies' were: Batman/Bruce Wayne (Adam West) Robin/Dick Grayson (Burt Ward) Alfred (Alan Napier), Commissioner Gordon (Neil Hamilton). The villains included The Riddler (Frank Gorshin), The Penguin (Burgess Meredith), The Joker (Cesar Romero) and Catwoman (Julie Newmar).

Ape and Essence: Shown by the BBC on 18 May, *Ape and Essence* was a satirical horror story by Aldous Huxley on the consequences of dropping the bomb. It was dramatised by John Finch

Adam Adamant Lives! In a more light-hearted vein, *Adam Adamant Lives!* appeared on BBC from 23 June to 13 October, produced by Verity Lambert.

In the opening episode, an Edwardian gentleman adventurer, Adam Llewellyn De Vere Adamant (Gerald Harper), is trapped by his archenemy, 'The Face' (Peter Ducrow). Condemned to 'die forever' - embedded in a block of ice - he is revived in 1966.



Radio Times listing: *No Place Like Earth*



Adam Adamant and Georgina Jones

Adam finds himself in 'Swinging' London, among neon-signs, blaring music, escalators, cars - and girls in mini-skirts. He helps one of the latter, Georgina Jones (Juliet Harmer), and she becomes one of his two companions. The second, William E Simms (Jack May), appears in the next episode.

The Devil's Eggshell: The BBC *Play of the Month* on 28 June was *The Devils Eggshell*.

Strange egg-shaped objects at the scenes of disasters, famines and deaths seem alien in origin, but are part of a conspiracy by scientists to shock the world's politicians into 'behaving.' The idea backfires, the scientists are beheaded publicly in Trafalgar Square, and tyranny returns.



* Dan goes underwater - *The Menace From Jupiter*

In *EAGLE*, *Give Me the Moon* ended and *The Menace From Jupiter* began. Dan Dare found himself under water searching for a strange ship that came streaking from the depths of space into the Atlantic (a bit like the *Return of Object Z?*).

Doctor Who (Fourth season): During the fourth series of *Doctor Who*, which began on 10 September, there was a change of Doctor. At the end of *The Tenth Planet*, which introduced the Cybermen, the Doctor 'regenerated' as Patrick Troughton replaced William Hartnell in the role.

Days to Come: On 25 October, the BBC *Play of the Month* was based on a short novel by H.G. Wells. In *Days to Come*, set in 2122, society is organised as a meritocracy, with children banded into three classes: 'Alpha', 'Beta' and 'Gamma', according to their IQ. The category 'Deviant' is for those who cannot adjust to society. Elizebeth Moris (Judy Dench) is in love with Jon Denton (Dinsdale Landen), a rocket launch-pad official. Her father would like her to marry Bindon (John Quentin), an up-and-coming bureaucrat, and decides that his daughter needs 'psychoadjustment.' Jon objects, violently. They escape the city and rediscover the beautiful - and cruel - world of nature.

The Girl From U.N.C.L.E.: So popular was *The Man From U.N.C.L.E.* on BBC1, that a spin-off series, *The Girl From U.N.C.L.E.* alternated with it from 27 October. U.N.C.L.E.'s new agents were April Dancer (Stephanie Powers) and Mark Slate (Noel Harrison)

Closing comment on 1964 - 1966

With the expansion in the amount of SF on ITV, increasingly, the distinction between SF and other genres became more blurred, *The Avengers* and *The Man from U.N.C.L.E.* being examples.

Out of the Unknown continued (on the BBC) what had been started on ITV with *Out of this World*, providing an anthology that mainly adapted stories by established SF authors. Irene Shubik, brought across from ITV (with others) by Sydney Newman, provided the common thread.

Following the demise of the *Pathfinders* and *City Under the Sea* serials, *Doctor Who* had filled the need for children's home-grown SF serials on BBC. On ITV *Z the Unknown*, its sequel and *The Master* followed in the BBC's children's serial tradition.

Gerry Anderson added two more SF puppet shows to his arsenal: *Stingray* and *Thunderbirds* (arguably not just for children). These series inspired

comic strips - as had his earlier series - this time to the extent of the creation of a new comic: *TV Century 21*, giving *EAGLE*, which had largely ignored TV, a rival.

Next: 1967 - 1969.

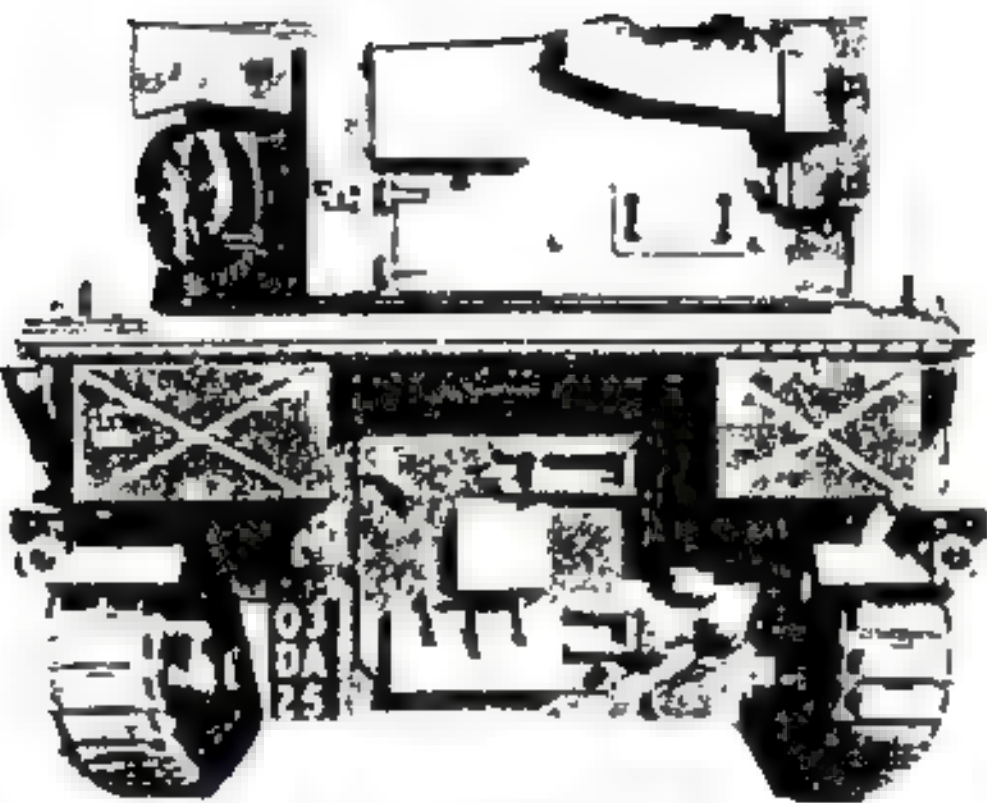
As *EAGLE*'s fading light is extinguished, this series comes to an end. On TV: *The Invaders*, *Captain Scarlet*, *Star Trek*, etc.



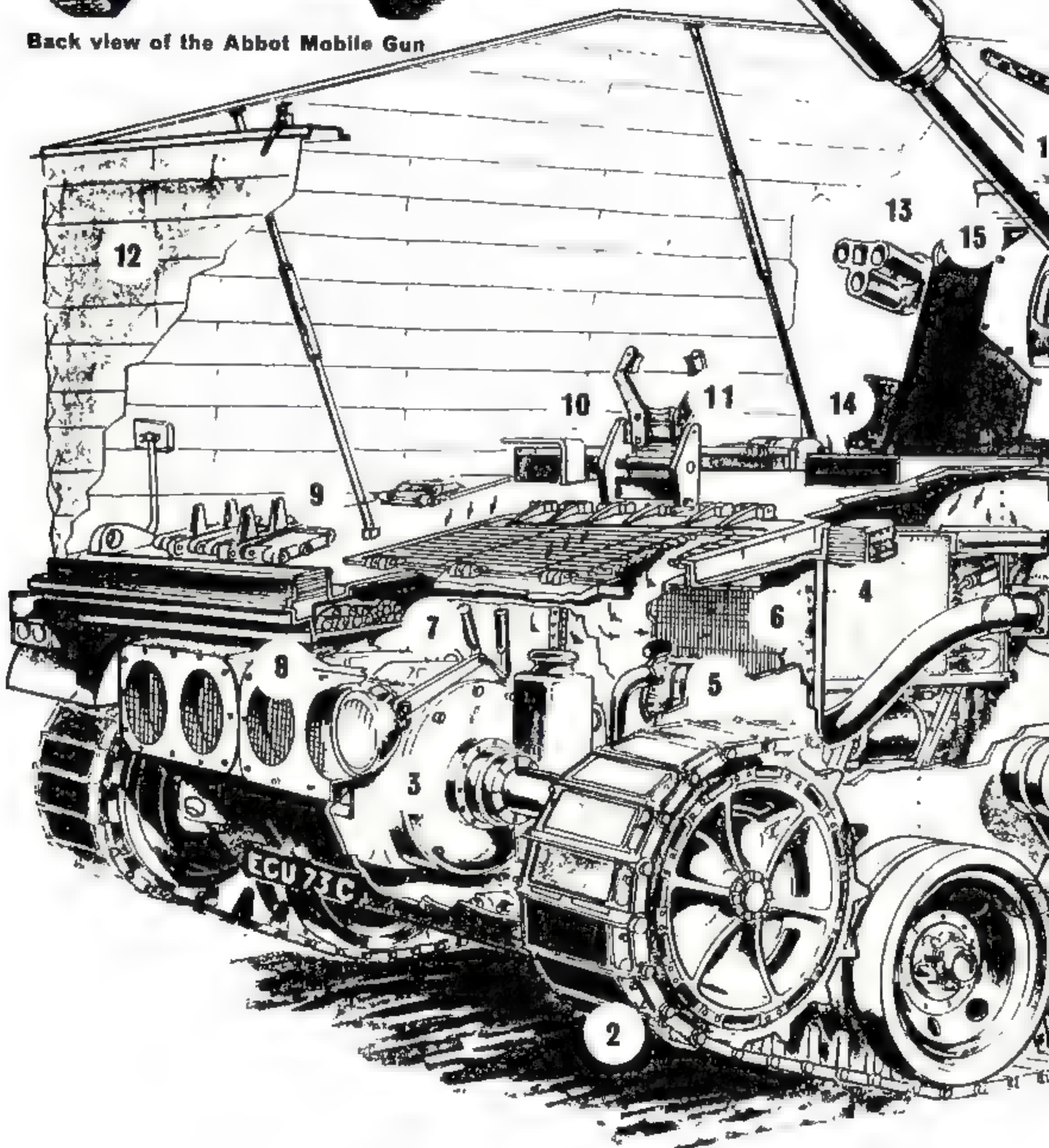
The Second Doctor

POST

John
h



Back view of the Abbot Mobile Gun

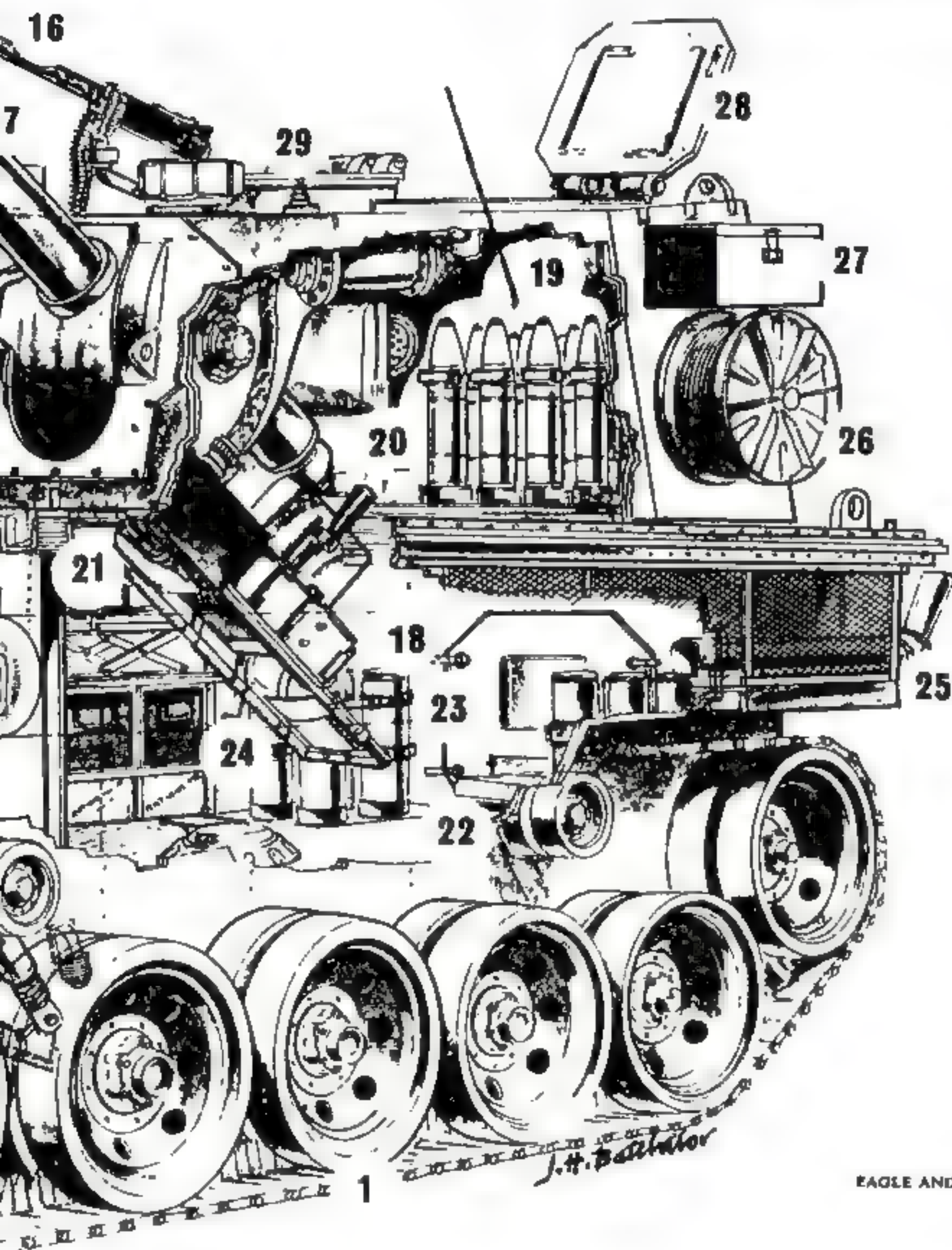


TAL AUCTION

John Batchelor, Eagle cutaway artist of the 1960s,
has given his original drawing of the Abbot Mobile Gun, first
published in Eagle on 14 May 1966, to the Society for club
funds. We offer it to the membership on a postal auction bid.

Offers in to H Corn by November 15, 2003

(This is a black and white drawing)



TREEN INTERCEPTOR

By Andy Boyce

From the Dan Dare story *THE SHIP THAT LIVED*

The final version of the Treen Interceptor makes its appearance in Vol 9 no 6. It has a long cigar-shaped fuselage with four fins holding teardrop-shaped propulsion units, like the fighters that appeared in the very first Dan Dare story. Unlike the early designs, the cockpit canopy is no longer aligned with one of the fins, but set centrally between them, and there is a clear gun turret with a rapid-firing gun.

Performance

The ship takes off vertically, using all four engine pods and an additional engine in the rear fuselage. When in space, the hull motor is not always shown in use. The ship can land vertically, or if there is a runway it can land like a conventional aircraft, using two (or possibly three) sets of wheels contained in each of the lower two engine pods.

Gun Layout

There are no good side views of the gun, so its exact length is a guess. I have included a general diagram showing the gun layout (not to scale).

- (1) Binocular sight
- (2) Handgrips (must include trigger)
- (3) Power cable
- (4) Section through clear canopy
- (5) External gun mantlet

Guide to References

The ships do vary in size a bit; compare the cramped interior shown in 9/6/4-5 with 9/13/1, where there are three people in the cockpit!

My main references were 9/6/10 for the main outline, 9/8/2 for the fins and the cockpit, with the gun turret mainly from 9/6/12). Views 9/6/5 and 12 show lateral grooves, marking the divisions between fuselage panels. I have shown these on my plan in the area of the cockpit; they may well extend all the way along the fuselage. The wings may also have been built in sections –see 9/8/3. In view 9/5/16, note the top of the cockpit is flush with the top of the hull.

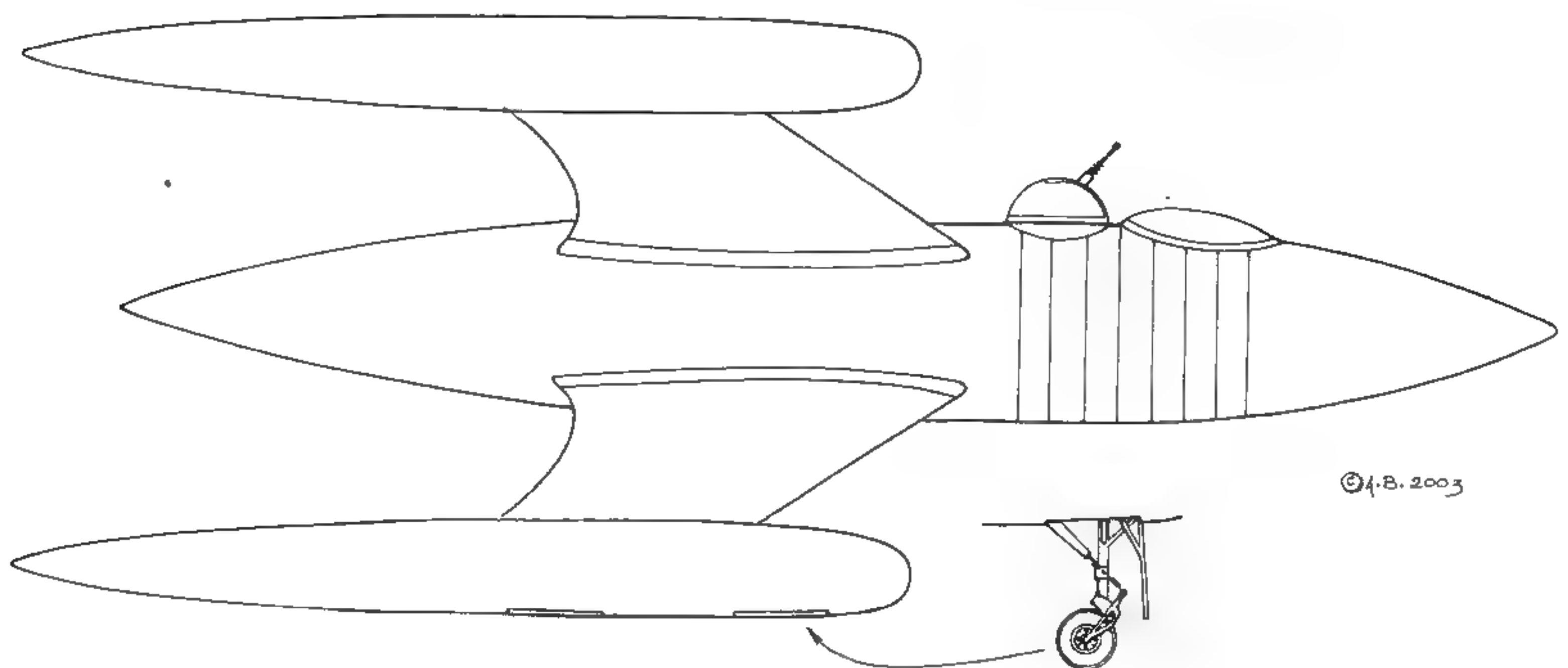
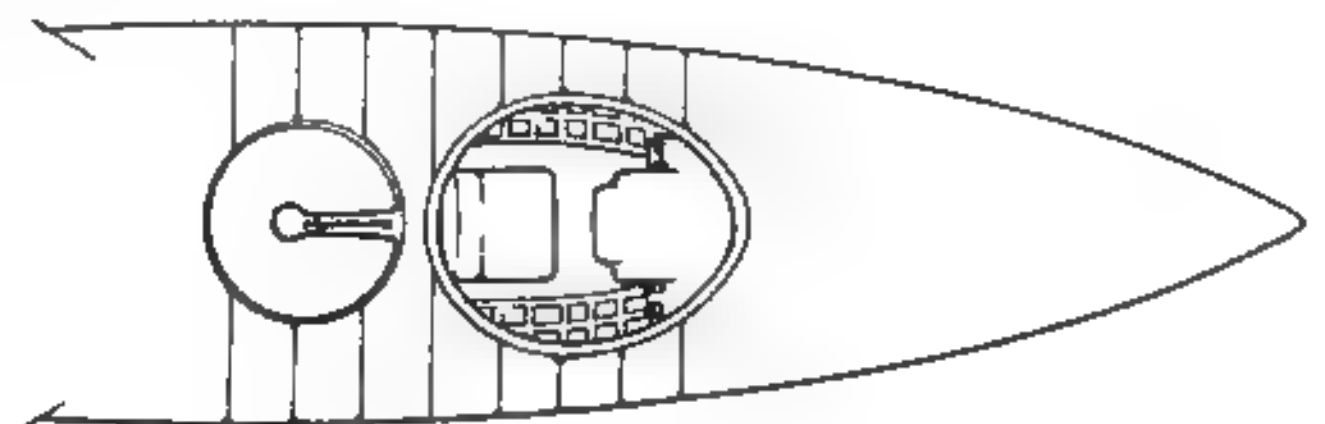
The ship is steered by “handlebar” style controls, as shown in 9/6/4 and 9/8/2. Digby seems to favour controlling the ship with his seat well back in 9/6/5, unlike Colonel Dare in 9/13/1.

Detail Variations

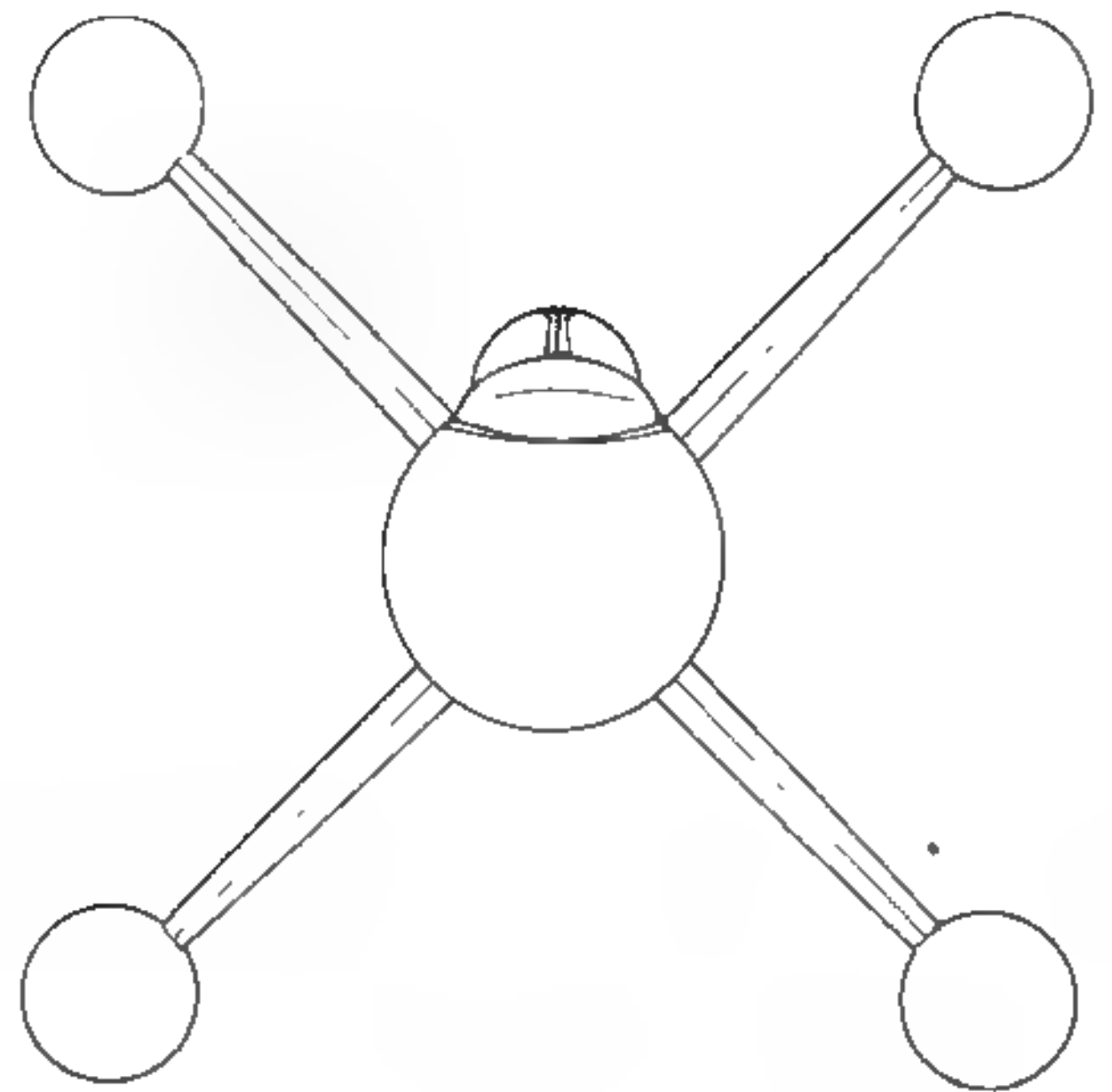
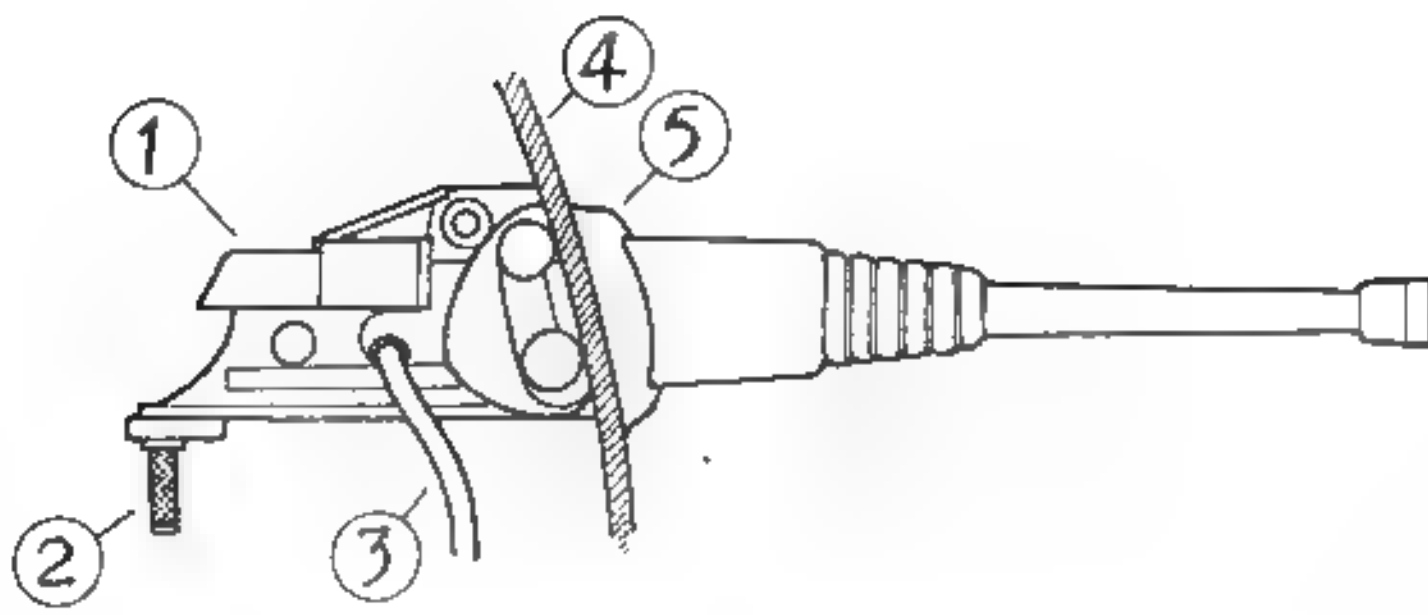
9/5/16 Large gun turret, top of cockpit flush with hull top.

9/6/4-5 & 9/6/11-12 Medium-small gun turret, rear of cockpit has straight edge.

9/6/3 & 9/8/3 Rear of fuselage rounded, rather than pointed.



©4.8.2003



WHO S WHO no 31

Tim Elliot



Eleven year old Tim in Ireland

Tim was born in 1949 at Pucklechurch near Bristol. Tim's father was in the RAF so spent his childhood moving around, both in the UK and abroad. After leaving school, he started work at AERE Harwell as a Scientist, though now as Project Manager his work is in the decommissioning/ demolition of these nuclear facilities.

His hobbies are music, graphic novels, anime and gliding, owning a $\frac{1}{3}$ share in a Cirrus. Tim cannot remember the first Eagle he read though he is sure the more observant of you will be able to tell him the year/ week from the front cover he is holding and predictably a Dan Dare fan.

DAN DARE AND SOME AMAZING STORIES

by William Ferbran

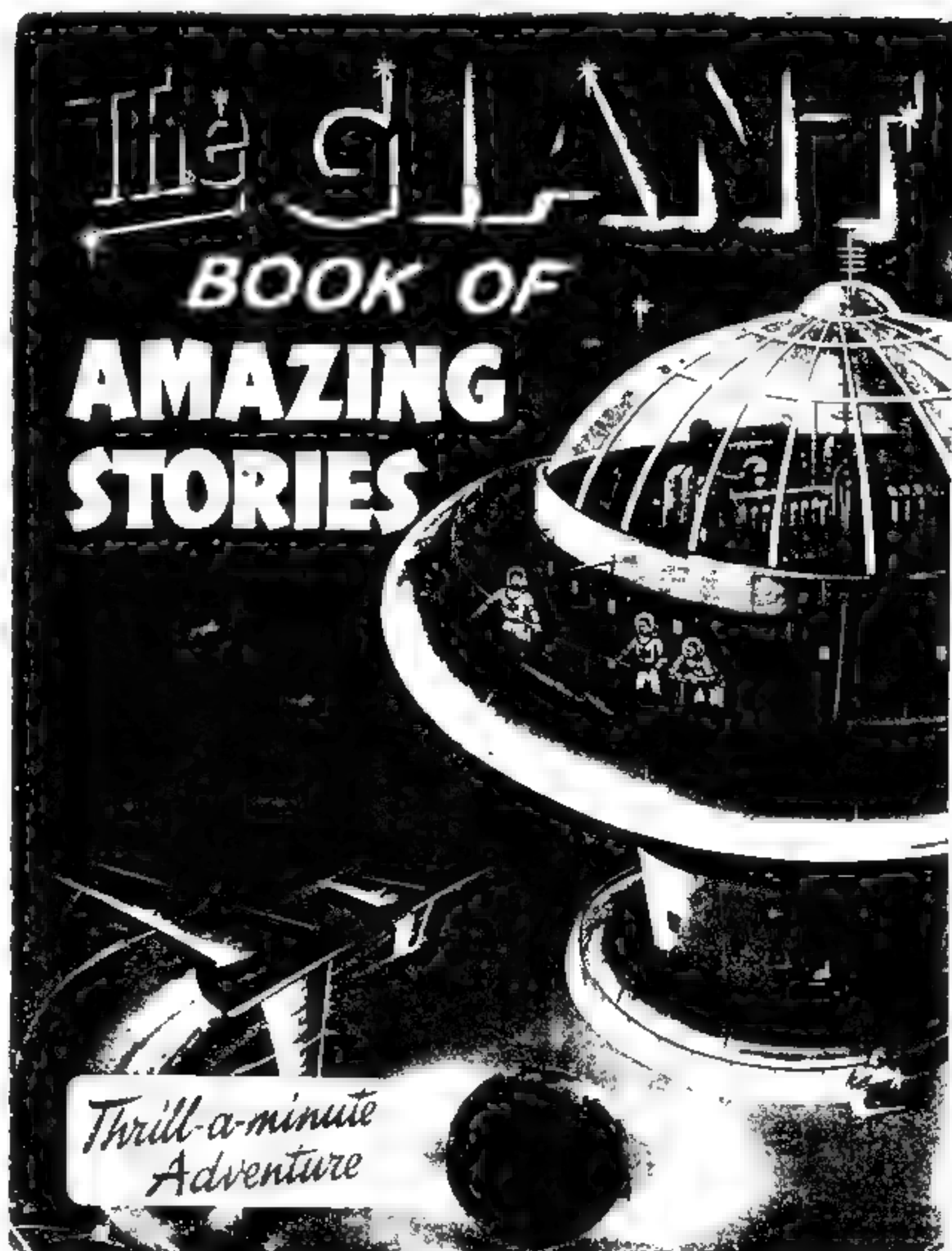
The Giant Book of Amazing Stories was a large paperback published by The Children's Press. I don't know when it was first produced, probably during the 1950s, although I received one as a Christmas present around 1963. Despite the imprecise title, all the stories in the book are "space" adventures.

The printing of the book is of rather poor quality, and the only colouring is a rather heavily applied green or red shading over the drawings, rather in the style of the old Beano comic. There are four simple strip cartoons, all with text beneath; the heroes are Rex Strong, Don Regan and Dave Garratt. They seem to be reprints from other comics or annuals. The artwork in the Dave Garratt story, drawn by C.I. (Chas.Ian?) Kennedy, is very good, and far better than anything else in the book.

There are also nine text stories with occasional illustrations. I suspect that most of these are reprints from other publications; one or two may originally have been written for an adult audience.

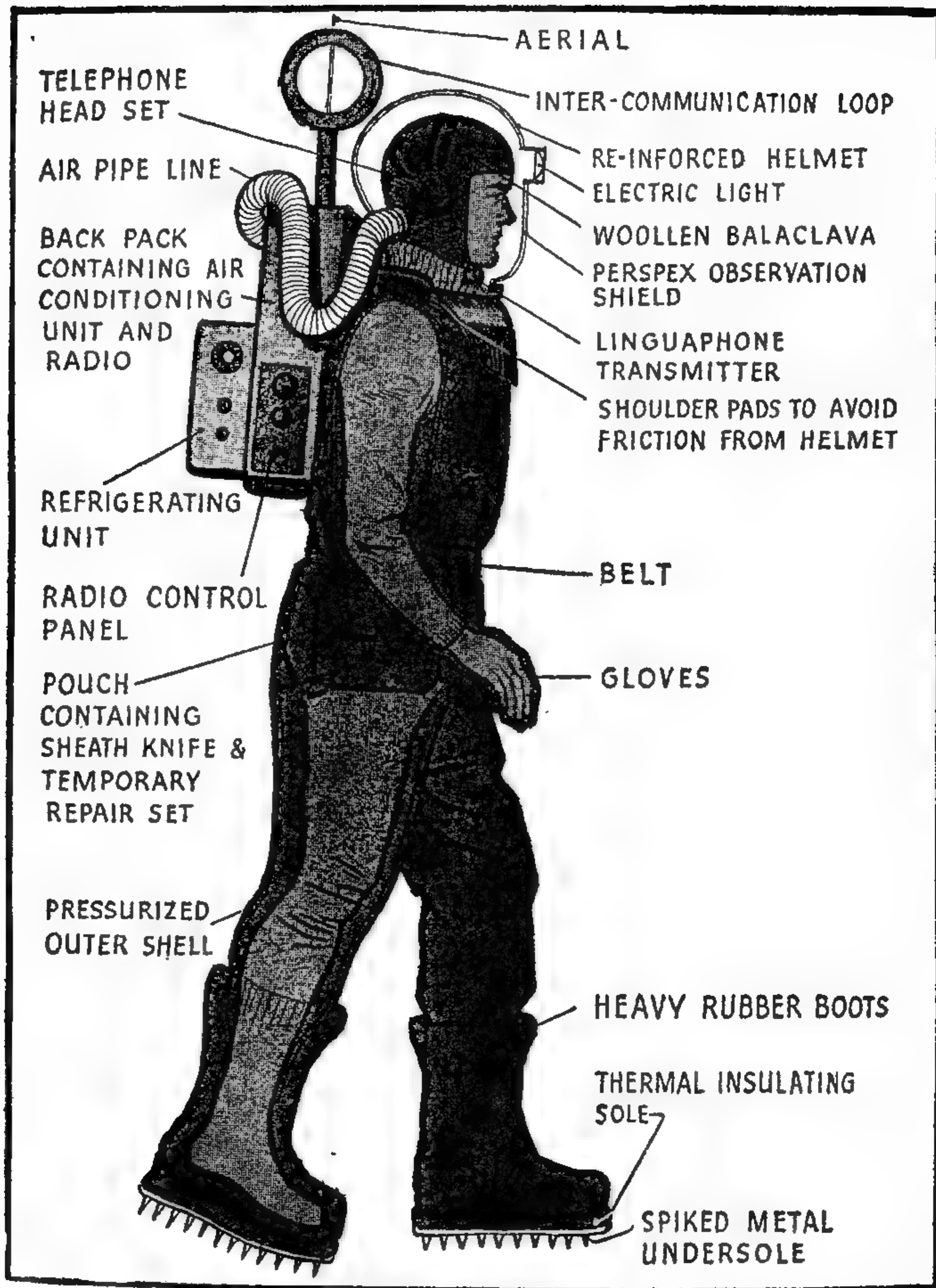
The Giant Book of Amazing Stories may have some original artwork, however, and it is here that there is a Dan Dare connection. One of the first pictures in the book shows a "Space-suit of the Future", with a familiar-looking space helmet.

Several text illustrations feature a similar space suit; now not only is the *helmet* familiar, so is *most of the space-suit*. It seems that the unidentified artist has copied Frank Hampson's



design, omitting only the gauntlets and changing the design of back-pack.





▲
 "The Space-suit of the Future". The astronauts depicted elsewhere in the book lack the over-sized boots and most of the luggage shown on this poor chap's back.

◀ Spacemen being attacked by Martian Mushrooms, which (believe it or not) are finally repulsed by a dose of highly-scented hair oil.

There may be an additional connection with Dan Dare. The hero of several text stories is "Space" Barr, who looks similar to Dan Dare in the illustrations, although his assistant Butterworth is a boffin, unlike our Albert Fitzwilliam.

The whole book is probably a low-budget attempt to cash in on the success of Dan Dare. Despite this, the book is an interesting addition to the enthusiast's library. The strip cartoons are amusing and the text stories are surprisingly readable, although not quite up to *EAGLE* standards! □

ALFRED GEORGE SINDALL

by Harold Harpole



Paul Temple (No. 1)
Alfred Sindall, *Evening News*, 19th November 1951

'Paul Temple', Francis Durbridge's radio detective, retained all his gentlemanly ways when pictured by Alfred Sindall for the *Evening News* (19th November 1951)



"PC49 - The case of the star pupil" from Eagle Annual 3

Little is known about the early life of Alfred George Sindall. But we do know that he was born in 1880 and died on 23rd January, 1969, having lived in Southfields Road, Stroud. Sindall illustrated quite a number of 'Biggles' books from 1935 to 1941 and after the War he started on newspaper strips.

In 1951 he drew 'Paul Temple', the character from the radio, in the *Evening News* until 1954. During this time he was asked to draw a back-page strip in full colour for Hulton's *Girl*, which he did. The story was 'Royal Margaret', the story by Chad Varah about Princess Margaret of Scotland who became St. Margaret. After this

story, Hulton's asked him to draw 'Elizabeth 1st' on *Girl*'s back page; a fitting story for Coronation year - 1953. Early that year Sindall took on the drawing of a PC 49 story for the Third *EAGLE* Annual, 'The Case of the Star Pupil'. Later in 1954 he drew strip illustrations for *Girl* Annual 3; another Chad Varah story called 'The Queen who risked her life'

In 1954, Sindall began what was to become the biggest job of his career. This was the newspaper strip for which he is best known: 'Tug Transom' in the *Daily Sketch*. This he did until 1965.

Many thanks to Steve Holland and David Gould for their help with this article. □



SCOTLAND
in the year 1069
Princess Agatha and her children, Margaret, Christina and Edgar, exiled from England because of Edgar's plotting to gain the throne from William the Conqueror, are staying with Malcolm, King of Scotland. Malcolm hopes Margaret will consent to marry him if he becomes a true Christian. Edgar, however, persuades her that the easiest way to win her heart would be to raid England, defeat William the Conqueror and make him, Edgar, King of England. Margaret warns Malcolm that while he is raiding her country, she will raid his. When Malcolm leaves, Margaret and Christina trap the soldier guarding the Treasure House and then they tie him up.



HURRY UP, MARGARET. WE MAY NOT HAVE MUCH TIME.

WE HAD TO TIE YOU UP FOR YOUR OWN SAKE IT WOULD HAVE BEEN EASY TO ENTICE YOU AWAY BUT THE KING WOULD HAVE PUNISHED YOU FOR LEAVING YOUR POST. AS IT IS HE WILL ONLY SCOLD YOU FOR BEING TRICKED.

GIRL 13 July 1953

"Royal Margaret" Chad Varah's story in Girl 1952



HURRAH FOR QUEEN ELIZABETH!



GRESHAM ALSO SAYS HE'S SENDING US TWO THOUSAND PIECES OF ARMOUR. WHAT A CLEVER MAN!

"Elizabeth Ist" Girl's back page. 1953

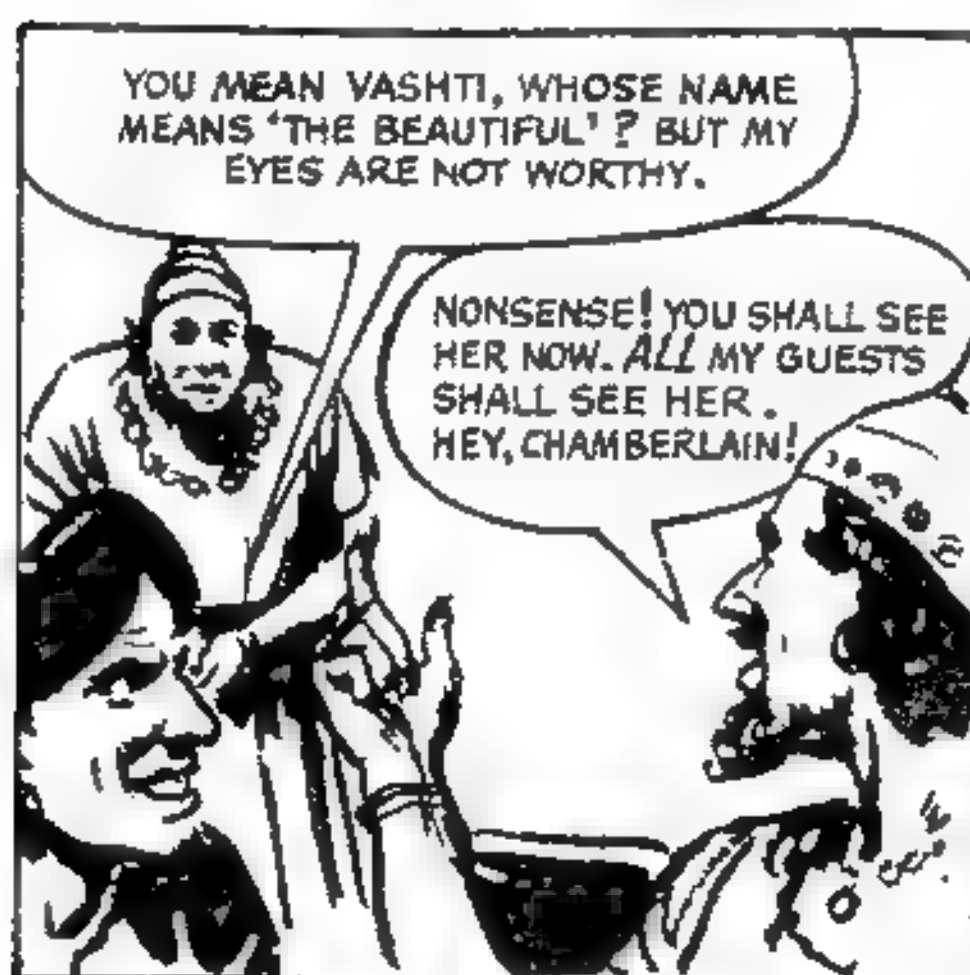


THE SHUSHAN PALACE IN BABYLON, 484 B.C. THE PERSIAN EMPEROR XERXES, RULER OF ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY SEVEN PROVINCES, IS HOLDING A GREAT BANQUET FOR HIS PROVINCIAL GOVERNORS...



HOW GREAT YOU ARE, O KING! EVEN YOUR SERVING MAIDS ARE BEAUTIFUL!

YOU THINK SO? THEN YOU SHOULD SEE THE QUEEN.



YOU MEAN VASHTI, WHOSE NAME MEANS 'THE BEAUTIFUL'? BUT MY EYES ARE NOT WORTHY.

NONSENSE! YOU SHALL SEE HER NOW. ALL MY GUESTS SHALL SEE HER. HEY, CHAMBERLAIN!



YES, O KING?

BRING VASHTI THE QUEEN HERE AT ONCE, THAT MY GUESTS MAY FEAST THEIR EYES ON HER BEAUTY.



BUT THE QUEEN... WHAT DOES THE KING THINK I AM — A DANCING GIRL? TELL HIM I'M NOT COMING.

O QUEEN, I... I DAREN'T TAKE SUCH A MESSAGE!

"The Queen that risked her Life" Girl Annual no.3

TUG TRANSON

By Alfred Sindall





resounding success, and talks are already underway to repeat the whole thing again next year, plus the possibility of using the Belgian National Space Centre as a venue for another Dan Dare exhibition in the spring of 2004. As there was no "gate" at the venue, it is impossible to tell the number of visitors we had: although the director tells me that on an average week he would expect upwards of 4,000 people to come through the doors.

I cannot close this article without a special thanks to David Britton, and to Jan and Ron French who, although they were unable to come themselves, were really there when it counted. If anyone would like the opportunity to purchase one of the "Dan Dare in Luxembourg" T-shirts please contact Ron French (Tele No. 01904 691028) □

THE DAN DARE VIDEO

by Howard Corn

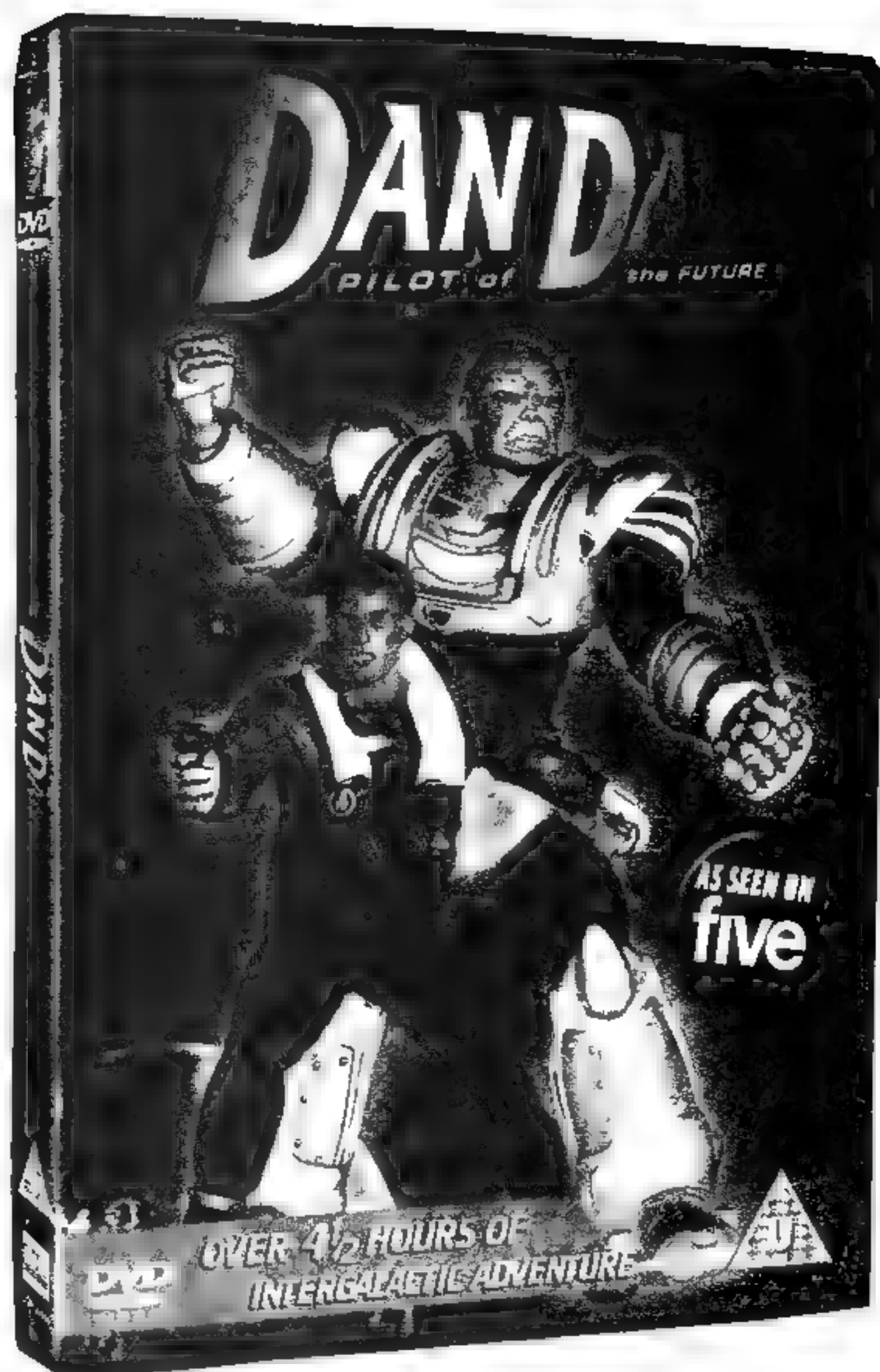
Derek Wilson first notified me of a Dan Dare video after his son saw an advertisement for it in his Beano comic. I duly went out to my newsagent and bought the current Beano, and there was the ad., which I cut out and pasted into the EAGLE Times supplement.

Trying to buy the video proved difficult. Many shops knew nothing of it; others did, but had no stock of it. However, I managed to buy one two weeks later. On business in Oxford I popped into HMV and was told that, according to the computer, they had one and it would be £10.99. I said I would have it and off went the assistant to find it. He returned ten minutes later to say that he couldn't find it. I thanked him for his time and later drove to Harrow.

In the town, I noticed a layby outside a Blockbuster video shop and pulled in. I entered the shop and repeated my request, "Yes," said the lady assistant. "We have one," and off she went to get it. She returned with it; a double video pack in a plastic container. "You can have this for a pound off," she said. "The container has a chip out of it. That will be £6.99!" Amazed at my good fortune, I left the shop a satisfied customer.

The video itself, put out by Columbia Tristar, contains six complete stories from the Channel 5 television series. All are made by the second company that took over the animation after the original company went bankrupt. The stories are: 'The God of War', 'The Outpost', 'Saturn Rocs', 'Space Race', 'Dead Space' and 'Surrender Earth'. The two tapes last 4½ hours.

For anyone who can't get Channel 5, or, like me, has a very poor picture, these videos give a good chance to see some of the series with a good picture and sound. □



SORRY, COLIN FREWIN, *BUT THIS JUST ISN'T* **DAN DARE!**

by Alan Vince

Unlike many people I have not seen any complete episodes of the "new" CGI Dan Dare TV series. I no longer own a TV set and, to be honest, don't miss much of the dumbing-down of most programmes these days. This might, in some people's eyes, preclude me from making any judgments on the one (successful) attempt to bring Frank Hampson's creation to the small screen.

To this I would argue that I don't have to watch Big Brother, Popstars or I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here!; to know I just wouldn't like them! I did, some time ago, see a short part of the series and it generally backed up my view on this type of thing. I am no real fan of CGI unless it's done *really well*. The names are the same but the changes made - to appeal to the younger market ... the U.S. market etc etc- just don't wash with me. If it ain't broke why fix it?

Frank Hampson freely admitted to me in 1974 that he would have "rather killed the whole thing off" than see what happened to it after his departure. So would he have approved of this "new" Dan Dare? It is also sad to hear that no credit is given to Frank - again. I took this up with the BBC in 1990 when they broadcast their version of the very first Dare story. My letter appeared in Radio Times along with the usual excuses of "lack of space etc". I also seem to recall Gil Page at Fleetway saying that no real permission was obtained from them before the BBC produced the serial. But if you are the BBC you can get away with this - but just try to use BBC copyright material without permission!

I don't agree that because many of us remember the original Dan Dare we are just being miserable old farts in not liking the new one. To explain this we only have to go back to the 1950s and understand why Frank's Dan Dare was so successful. Frank, without any real training in that field and without any lengthy research, put together a series of well-thought-out guidelines on which his whole strip was to be based. I had a

letter published in Photoplay Film Monthly back in early 1978 in which I compared the success of the first Star Wars film with Frank's *EAGLE* strip. They were both successful because they both had the right ingredients. Because George Lucas kept complete control of his creation he was able to develop the main characters, the designs of the spacecraft and (just like Frank) give the "star" players backgrounds, a history, blood pressures, loves and hates and made them far more believable than many similar creations.

I freely admit that I wasn't a particularly bright child (so what's changed you might ask?) in 1950 but something about the Dan Dare universe made a big impression on me and many others. It wasn't just that there were no real rivals for young people's attention then, it was far deeper than that. Frank felt genuinely pleased that he had succeeded in what he set out to achieve ... to produce not so much a good drawing as a good story, a narrative. Luckily for us he did both and his leadership was followed by the other artists and writers on *EAGLE*. In my opinion you could have easily read and enjoyed the 1950s *EAGLE* at the age of 7 or 77! Why not?

The big problem with the new *EAGLE* owners (after both Frank and Marcus Morris had left) was they gradually lost that understanding of the readership. Even in an age of TV and all that followed you can still produce good quality publications. By the time the "new" Eagle began to chop and change the Dan Dare character the thinking was that the readers could only follow a story that lasted a few weeks and, given a gap of a few months, even repeat the same stories and no one would notice. I agreed to help the new Eagle back in 1982 because, at that time, they appeared to be thinking of involving Frank Hampson in some way. Those I dealt with, Dave Hunt, Gil Page and Pat Mills, had great admiration for Frank and Pat couldn't believe just how good those first Dare stories were. Sadly Frank's health wasn't too good then and the "high command" at IPC soon had his name taken off the credits. By then it mattered little to Frank.

Getting back to the "new" CGI Dan Dare: why do we always have this excuse that, to be successful in the USA, the series had to be changed for the American Market? While in contact with a few American production companies, on an unrelated subject, I was asked

about my interest in Dan Dare and *EAGLE*. To my surprise the people in question were amazed at the material I sent them and followed up the subject on their web sites. They loved Dan, the Mekon, the Treens, Phants etc. This was not some updated Dare but Frank Hampson's original. So why does Dan have to look more like a James Bond and lose his famous eyebrows? Why change Digby? Why destroy the wonderful Hampson visions of Venus? In my opinion the new owners of the copyright just haven't got the imagination to fill Frank's shoes; it needs a Hampson or Keith Watson to realise fully the potential of such an important creation. It's one thing to say you are keeping faith with the original and/or were "inspired" by it but quite another to actually come up with the goods.

If the only audience Colin Frewin was aiming at was the younger one then why not call it Captain Condor? Does Dan Dare mean anything to very young children? Earlier efforts to bring Dan to the small screen did at least try to keep faith with Frank's visions. There may have been a time when the copyright could have been acquired by people with a better feel for it. I always wished that, say, Tim Rice, Brian May or Terry Jones could have put up the money *and* involved the *EAGLE* Society.

Maybe, here, I am talking about something of real substance - the down-market kid's stuff we have seen. At the time of the Keith Watson revival at Fleetway there seemed a good chance not only to see the original back in print but also a large amount of merchandise on the market. Dan Dare toys, models, books etc. Why it never happened I don't really know. There was a lot of indifference at Fleetway and with the never-ending takeovers it was hard to keep up any pressure on those who might have been able to make the right decisions. One senior executive once told me he didn't really care what the readership wanted, it was what *he* wanted. So, to quote dear Frank again, Dan Dare was still in alien and clumsy hands. If you dared to suggest, as I did once, that a little more care was taken with the Dan Dare strip (in the 80s and 90s) you might well get your head bitten off and called a "know-all"! Keith Watson was given the chance to show how it should be done but the constant change of artist and the poor scripts did nothing to fully revive Dan Dare.

I can be accused of being an old Dan Dare/*EAGLE* fan who just doesn't understand the

modern world, who hasn't moved with the times and who just won't admit when his cause is lost. I'd rather say that because I was a reader of the original *Eagle* and grew up with Frank Hampson's Dan Dare I, like many of you, have a right to speak out on how I feel. I had many conversations with Frank and was saddened to see his revived hopes dashed. After his 1975 Lucca award he *really* believed there was a new life for his beloved creation. He felt not even IPC would block a chance for him to take up the cause again - doubtless aided by Keith, Don and Joan! At that time there was no Dan Dare in print, but Frank got nowhere. Then we had the awful 2000AD Dan Dare and the familiar excuse that it was for the kids of today, while cashing in on the name alone. Even Frank's attempt to put together a book on his life, following in the wake of his awards in 1975 and 1976, was hindered by Marcus Morris and IPC. Marcus was putting together The Best of *EAGLE* book and IPC were only too pleased to co-operate with him. Doubtless Marcus was a higher profile person than poor old F.H. and had no problem in getting the ok for reproductions in his book. Frank was to be limited to only *one* episode of Dan Dare in his proposed book.

When reviewing The Man Who Drew Tomorrow former *EAGLE* contributor Ruari McLean said Frank Hampson "deserved a better biography than this". Well, did HE or anyone else try to write one? Frank had largely been forgotten except for those of us who still wrote to him and, at that time, didn't fully understand his reasons for keeping quiet. The sad truth has always been that Dan Dare will be brought out of retirement only when the moneymen see a chance to make bucks on the name. There's no need to credit Frank Hampson for, even if he were alive, he wouldn't get anything.

So we come back to the argument "Who really cares?" If a new generation thinks Colin Frewin created Dan Dare so what? Very often others have taken credit in the past. One book I saw credited Dare to Frank Bellamy. A book called Heroes of the Spaceways had seven pictures from the Dan Dare strip, not one by Frank! All the pictures were by Don Harley, Keith Watson and Desmond Walduck. Likewise one of the Christie's auction brochures only used illustrations by Keith and Desmond. We also read that David Hockney

and Gerald Scarfe illustrated the stories ... did I miss something?

To my mind Frank Hampson was a genius, vastly underrated for what he brought to the pages of *EAGLE*. It took an Italian convention to give him an award - quickly trebled by Denis Gifford and IPC the following year. Frank, like many of his contemporaries (Embleton, Bellamy, Humphris), did not talk down to his readers. He gave them credit for using their eyes and imaginations. He created, like George Lucas, a whole universe in which his characters could have amazing adventures. He was a one-off and, sadly,

had no real heir - save Keith Watson, who was also held back by petty editorial decisions and copyright. I am only sorry that now the famous name has made it to the TV screen it is not what I would have liked. Maybe that dream is lost forever and, we will just have to savour what the 1950s gave us. It was the best after all, by the man who actually created it. I am, finally, reminded of a remark by a BBC producer who was putting together a piece on Frank and Dan Dare. I had pointed out a few mistakes in his "research". His reply: "Facts, I'm not interested in facts ... we just want to make pretty pictures!" □

Dan Dare and the battle for £11.5m

By Sarah Umbrick
and Simon Watkins

NOT since the evil Mekon launched a sneak attack on Interplanetary Space Fleet has Dan Dare been embroiled in such a bitter and costly battle - and this time lawyers are involved.

Dan Dare, star of the Eagle comic from the Fifties, has become embroiled, albeit indirectly, in an £11.5 million High Court battle between Barclays and insurer Royal & SunAlliance.

Barclays is suing RSA, claiming it is owed money from an insurance policy it took out in 1999 to cover its investment in a TV cartoon version of Dan Dare.

Barclays provided the cash to the Dan Dare Corporation, which owns the rights to the fictional character, to fund a 26-episode animated series.

In a writ issued in the Commercial Court earlier this year, Barclays said it took out an insurance policy with RSA providing cover if the money earned from sales of the series failed to match the cash it had lent.

The series was completed and has since been broadcast on Five, but Barclays claims it did not receive any cash from the project at certain key deadlines specified in the policy, so it made claims to the insurance company.

The first claim was made in August 2001 when Barclays said it made a claim for just over £3.5 million. It said the sum was still outstanding.

Barclays' writ says the bank made a second claim last November at the end of the policy, this time for £8 million, again because it said it had not received payments from the Dan Dare project as defined by its policy.

On top of the £11.5 million, Barclays is also claiming interest



Superhero: Dan Dare faces his toughest fight - in the High Court

from RSA on the sum, which is growing at £398 a day.

Barclays declined to comment further on the case.

RSA said: 'We are contesting the claim. But as it is subject to various legal and insurance contract issues that have yet to be resolved, it is not appropriate for us to comment further at this time.'

Dan Dare first appeared in Eagle comic in 1950. One childhood fan was Colin Frewin, who grew up to

be a TV producer. He set up The Dan Dare Corporation and bought the film and television rights to the character 15 years ago with the aim of producing a TV series.

Dan Dare: Pilot Of The Future, which features the voices of Robbie Coltrane and Charles Dance and music by Elton John, was completed last year and is being shown on Five on Saturday mornings.

Frewin was not available to comment on the legal row.

Holidays in the Fifties

by James Howard

By now many of you will have had your 2003 holiday, and will have many memories of sunny European locations or other foreign parts. Today, with more affluence, cheap foreign travel and more leisure time, several holidays are taken each year. Not like the fifties!

How holidays have changed! Back in the fifties, the lucky ones among us might have gone to one of the many seaside resorts around our coastline. Skegness, Blackpool, Yarmouth, Southend, Weymouth, Torquay and many other towns benefited from the "annual holiday". This was usually of one week's duration; if you were lucky and had well-off parents, it could be two weeks.

Many seaside resorts expected an influx of holidaymakers from nearby towns as their factories closed for the summer break. Skegness could expect to be invaded by many people from Lincoln, and Rhyl could expect a good many people from Birmingham. Northampton people went to Yarmouth, Manchester people went to Blackpool.

The working man was entitled to two week's paid holiday a year and so he would cart his family off to the seaside by train, coach or maybe motorbike and sidecar. The accommodation would be in cheap boarding houses, hotels or perhaps a static caravan. The week would then consist of visiting the beach, playing Bingo, drinking in pubs and cafes and consuming platefuls of fish and chips.

As the fifties progressed, holiday camps became more popular. Butlin's became the "brand leader" and their advertisements could be seen in many magazines. Butlin's also ran a 15-minute Radio Luxembourg show called The Butlin Beaver Club.

When I was a lad I sent away for a Butlins brochure (I had a passion for sending off for things) and received some very colourful information about the holiday camps. "Where you make new friends" was the slogan employed by Butlins across their pictures of good-looking men and women in swimming costumes. Rival camps started up, such as Fred Pontins and Warner Brothers (nothing to do with the film company.)

Many people went to the same place year in, year out, becoming close friends with their guest-house hosts, and Christmas and birthday cards would be exchanged.

Although we didn't know it, many of us were quite poor in the fifties and even a seaside holiday was not possible. Many families took an odd day out during holidays spent at home and Hulton Press would put on their Boys and Girls Exhibition during the summer holidays for this purpose. Many families went to stay with relatives for a week as a way of having a cheap holiday. Down in Kent, many Londoners went hop-picking for a cheap working holiday. This would get them out of the daily drudgery of factory life and the basic accommodation and paid work gave them a change that they would have been unable to afford otherwise.

Another holiday idea that Hulton's put on was the Y.H.A. scheme, which has been well documented in Eagle Times. Yet another idea was Holiday Playtime and thanks to Ron French and Chris Malbon we are able to show a poster for these events. Fun and games were put on around the seaside towns, and children who showed up at the beach with their copy of Eagle, Girl, Swift or Robin took part in the activities.

School trips were something of a treat in the fifties and I well remember going to the Bath and Wells Show, Blenheim Palace, and Paignton in Devon. Transport was by coach or train and we schoolchildren would take our packed lunches and four shillings of spending money for a summer day out. Back at school we would then have to write an essay about it.

When you were on holiday in the fifties, what did you do about your *EAGLE*? Did you, like me, have to wait until you returned home on the Saturday or did you buy it at the holiday town? One of our members, Ken Wooton, recalls how he looked forward to buying an Eagle on holiday only to be struck down with a migraine on the day of publication and having to stay in bed!

Looking BACK

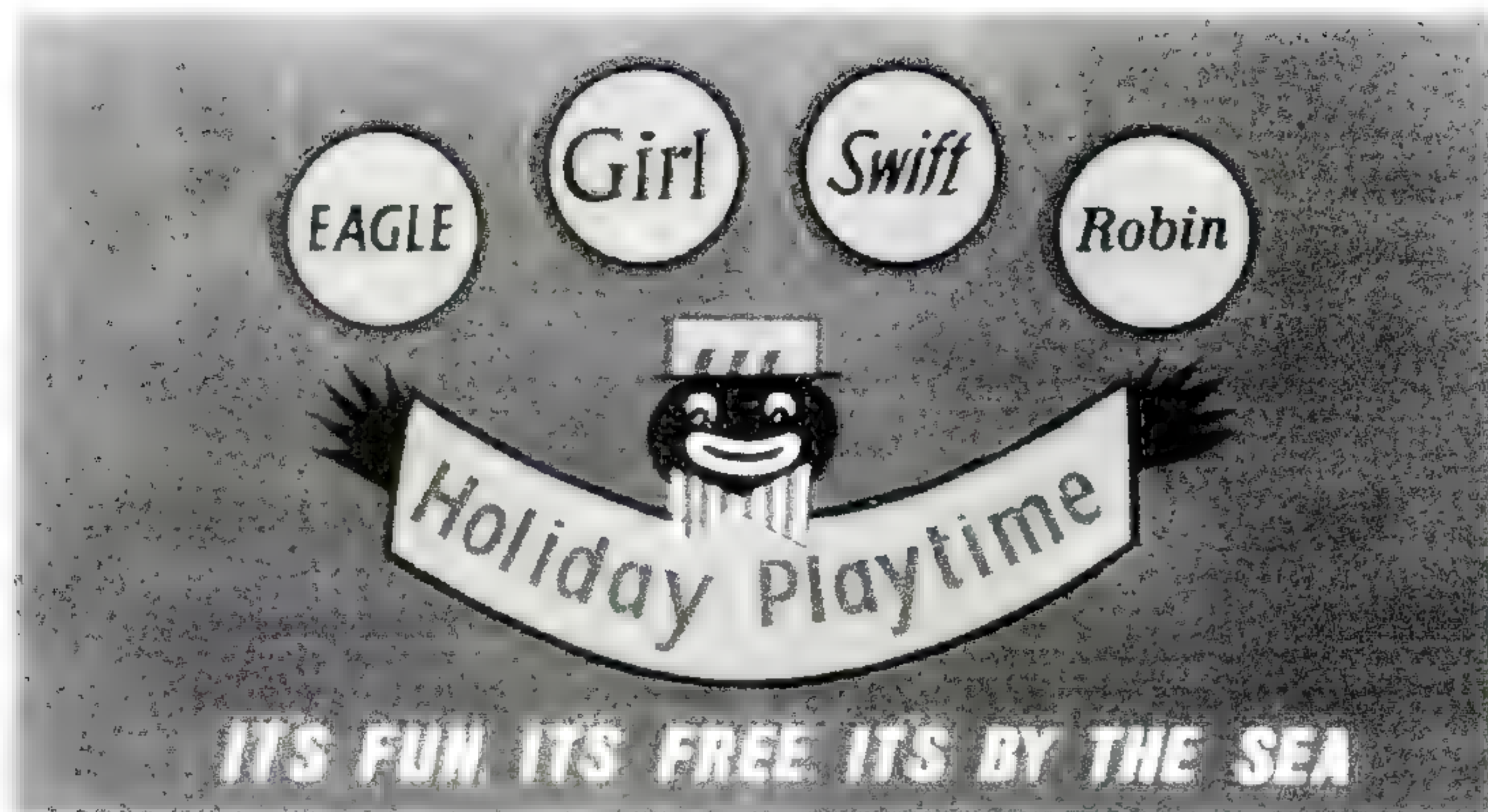


● **REMEMBRANCE** James J. Wyman's bookshop in Northampton is a fitting tribute to the town's literary heritage. The photo recently published in the Northampton "Chronicle & Echo" shows an interesting poster above the bookstall!

But holidays, like everything else, move on, and today many people have five or six weeks' holiday a year. With the possibility of flying to Spain for around £29 and many other cheap flights to exotic places, the old seaside towns are not what they used to be. Holiday camps are now turning into luxury holiday parks, and people are now taking

two or three weeks' holiday a year. With more affluence, more holidays and ever more cars around today it seems to be "That's one holiday - we have another in a few weeks' time!"

People go off at a whim, taking advantage of cheap, late booking offers. But it's not like the old days when we treasured our holiday memories □



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TO
FRIDAY
DURING
AUGUST**

**SPORTS
SAND
COMPETITIONS
GAMES**

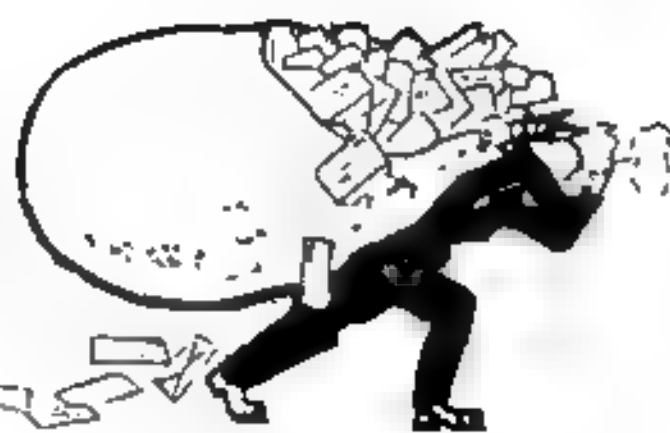
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To
Keith Howard
25A Station Road
Harrow
Middlesex HA1 2UA

Dear *EAGLE TIMES*,

Completionists might like to know that a quality print 22"x 4" of the two 1949 pages of Chaplain Dan Dare is available for £25 from The Book Palace, Jubilee House, Bewardine Road, Crystal Palace, London, SE 19 3AP. phone 020-8768-0022.

A low resolution scan is on www.bookpalace.com (click on "original art & prints" and look for Hampson) which shows an extra nine frames not printed in *Living with Eagles*. I hasten to add that I am not employed by this company!

It was very noticeable in Rod's article that the matt paper of page 25 was much kinder to grey scale printing than the usual shiny stock, which also has the disadvantage of making one's finger ends go all sweaty and horrible.

Belated thanks to Derek Wilson (Spring 2003) for the tip-off about "Blast Off!" which I too have found to be unputable-downable. In return, can I mention Mac Raboy's Flash Gordon strips from 1948-1967 currently being reprinted in three volumes by Dark Horse and also available via www.amazon.co.uk. The plots are a bit formulaic, with Dale serially getting all huffy because some exotic female takes a fancy to Flash, but the artwork is superb (with the proviso that Raboy is much better on swirling costumes than he is on space hardware).

Cheers,

RAY ASPDEN (Droitwich)

Dear *EAGLE TIMES*,

I was fascinated to read Andrew Coffey's article 'Aitchison's Lost World', particularly as it was I who put forward the idea of running the story to Andy Vincent - the Editor of *EAGLE* at the time (see my article in *EAGLE TIMES* Vol. ?). But it wasn't just Andrew's words of "thick jungle" and "snakes and all kinds of fearful wildlife" that echoes my life here, but more so the poignant sentence of: "the natives fear trouble from some unseen malevolent force" ... and wondered if Sir Arthur had discovered the existence of "The Dwindies"!

According to my neighbour Anaclito Rodriguez, he and his wife have had a life-time of living alongside the dwindies. They are known to have used a pathway that, now due our house having been built where it is, lies just to the back of it. Whether you believe what I am about to say or not is entirely immaterial, but in the ten years I've lived here, there is little doubt that there's something unusual afoot - and all taking place within three feet of the rear wall - that I really cannot explain.

It began with the electrical wiring to the house which I carried out myself, and although I received none, in a space of 37 minutes a visiting official from the electricity company gave himself six shocks before giving up and going home.

Then I had an engineer friend to install a gate valve at the back of the house for the water system. It was assembled and dismantled no less than five times before it finally became leak-proof, and even while he was doing it, I just happened to tread on a piece of wood that had a nail sticking out of it. It was then that the locals decided that it was time I learnt about "The Dwindies".

Over the following weeks, the ball-valve mysteriously filled with water and sank resulting in a flooded kitchen; a lizard died belly up in the water tank - somehow squeezing through a gap that you can't even insert a cigarette paper - thus tainting the drinking water with its foul clear-liquid body-fluids ... plus all the pipe work in between; and then there was the case of the ladder.

The two sides of the house were relatively easy to sort out, but the front and back - where the corrugated metal roof came into contact with the wooden roofing struts running from side to side produced small gaps at each 'wave in the corrugation'. Apart from a crocodile, a bison or one of Professor Challenger's pterodactyls, almost anything could get through.

Having covered windows and doors with mosquito screen, I cut two-inch-wide strips from bits I had left over - and it was a simple matter of fixing them in place with the staple gun. Unless mice had the habit of carrying around their own miniature set of bolt-cutters, by my estimation, no longer ought they be able to gain access.

Having completed the front, with the help of the builder's make-shift ladder, I set about tackling the back where the dwindies are reputed to be (I have to point out that I hadn't yet been advised to repeat the sentence "Excuse Me" whenever I went there ... though I do now). It did incur quite a bit of awkward twisting of my body at odd angles and turning to get myself just in right position, and as I was just about to fix the very last piece, I mumbled loudly to anyone who cared to listen: "Right you bastards, if you want to get me, now's the time ... or you'll be too late!"

I'd hardly got the last word out when the whole ladder disintegrated into a pile of matchwood underneath me. I didn't fall far - probably not more than seven or eight feet, but unfortunately fell on top of a fencing post which drove itself into my upper lip - luckily not tearing anything too much. A shock to the system all the same.

Half-a-dozen houses away, there lives a rather wizened individual affectionately known as "The Gnomes Lady". I'd seen her loads of times, and apart from thinking that she must live under a stone, there is nothing to suggest that she is anything but a 'normal person'. She was called for and in coming in through our doorway, Rosa looked alarmed as she bodily shivered ... almost as though someone had walked over her grave.

Sitting in one of the two comfy armchairs and feeling a bit sorry for myself, prayers spoken in the local dialect of Bicolana (a derivative of Spanish) was followed by a request for four items - an enamel plate, some cooking oil, a candle and a match.

With the candle lit, "The Gnomes Lady" encircled my head and body with the flickering flame, shivered a couple more times, and proceeded to tell me the good news. Although the dwindies basically liked me, they had felt like having a bit of fun at my expense. Hmmm, how bloody amusing. Using a finger dipped in cooking oil, she inscribed the sign of the cross on both sides of the plate, and then proceeded to blacken the concave side by using the smoke from the flame of the candle.

A picture appeared. Amid "Oooooo's" and "Ahhhhh's", the two discussed at great lengths as to what they thought they saw. After yet another good helping of Spanish-type-Bicolana prayers, more 'crosses' were inscribed using the blacked sooty oil from the plate, this time onto my forehead, throat, nape of the neck, inner elbows, wrists, knees and ankles. But it didn't quite end there.

First of all, I was instructed to wear my underpants inside-out for the foreseeable future, and over the next nine days, prayers were said in Spanish. Rosa's grandmother, May, carried out some ritual outside the house at sunset which had involved a few specially-purchased stones from the town's market-place and burning something or other that stank the house out when the wind happened to change direction.

But somehow, the mice *still* managed to get in.

ROGER PERRY (The Philippines)

E.T. If they basically like you, Roger, I hate to think what they would do if they didn't!

Dear *EAGLE TIMES*,

Regarding the current issue it was sad to read of the passing of Peter Jackson, a wonderful artist. However I very much enjoyed the update on Keith Watson's Don Harley's and Rod Barzilay's 'Phoenix Mission' and 'Green Nemesis' Dan Dare strips. Having one of the Green Nemesis boards I can say that the artwork is beautiful and Don Harley is a marvel and can out-paint and draw just about any other working strip artist in modern British comics today. Rod is a master at complex story lines and the detail involved in Dan Dare! I also enjoyed part one of the Martin Aitchison story and the Lost World feature. He is an artist whose work I do not know well, but it inspired me to look again at his beautifully illustrated 'Luck of the Legion' and the 'Lost World' in *EAGLE*. As usual, I looked first at *EAGLE* on the Web and Postbag; these are excellent, lively features.

Regarding your replies to my letter, I'm afraid I hadn't realised the complexities of the printing process, but I do hope you might consider a Best of *EAGLE TIMES*: Dan Dare maybe in the format of the *EAGLE TIMES* Annual. A sort of *EAGLE* enthusiasts Dan Dare reference book. All the features could be revised by the authors, or at least re-typeset*. I'm sure just about every Dan Dare fan would want a copy of all the great work that didn't find its way into Hawk Books, Living with Eagles and the Man Who Drew Tomorrow ... and could probably think of features I have forgotten or don't know about. I look forward to Nigel McMurray's and Adrian Perkins' *EAGLE TIMES* index to find out even more. I'm missing about half a dozen copies of ET now and will look forward to seeing what Dan Dare features were in its predecessors and which issues I need to search out.

From reading back issues and talking to other fans, I have discovered that Frank Hampson, Frank Bellamy, Keith Watson, Don Harley, the studio of the 1950s and 60s have been featured on TV and film a number of times, and that they have been interviewed by group

members on video. Probably they were featured on radio or gave audio interviews too. Also there have been videos discussed of *EAGLE DAYS*, conventions and events (Eaglecon '80?) I believe, Marcus Morris was also interviewed. Could all these be listed? - dates, durations, a brief description of content, quality of footage and what exists? These could surely be compiled onto one master VHS videotape (or DVD) and sold to members. Was something similar to this done at one time? I would very much like a copy as most of these greats have passed away now and I was too young to meet them at conventions and am still too far away to go to *EAGLE DAYS* etc - although I may try and make it to the Manchester exhibition.

I will certainly think about an interview with Don Lawrence and have discussed it with his agent in Pandarve, the Don Lawrence fanclub in the Netherlands. Interestingly they are planning to launch the Trigan Empire (nearly 90% from the original art boards!) and his recent European strip Storm in 12 volumes each, in English later this year, so the timing is apt. The idea of an interview is a little daunting as I have never had anything published outside university before. Also as I live in Northern Ireland, my interview will not be one-to-one in person as Don lives in the south of England. However, if it goes well, I would consider doing similar interviews with John Burns (Wrath of the Gods) and Gerry Haylock (Knights of the Road) if there is enough interest from members and the artists are willing.

I hope my ideas of the Best of *EAGLE TIMES*: Dan Dare and the video or DVD of the Dan Dare studio artists, writers, TV and film features stir up some interest ... Fingers crossed! And finally, many thanks to the team and the members who helped me track down back issues of ET with my wants list and search for old newspaper strips. Also to the Dan Dare artists for the hours I've enjoyed from the strip's wonderful art, and their kind letters and enjoyable conversations. Everyone has been a pleasure to chat to and is obviously passionate about our shared interest in *EAGLE* and comics in general! A League of Gentlemen indeed!

Yours sincerely,

STEPHEN LAW (Northern Ireland)

P.S. If any member has any of these tv/pathe/radio/audio interviews or features and is willing to copy or loan them PLEASE get in touch. Is there a Garth society similar to Jeff Hawke's Cosmos? It may interest some members to know the Dark Horse has just published Mac Raboy's Flash Gordon Sunday strips (1948-1953) in one volume. It is available on Amazon. As are other notable great comic strips currently being reprinted - The Spirit, Prince Valiant, Modesty Blaise and James Bond.

*E.T. *Great ideas, Stephen, but some of us have already been at this for 30 years and longer. How about volunteering to do the typesetting?*

Dear *EAGLE TIMES*,

My sincere apologies for not doing my usual missive for the previous *ET* postbag, partly due to illness. I hope, however, that my round-up of *EAGLE* - related items this month may be of value and interest to you all.

Firstly, as with everyone else in the Society, I feel a great sense of loss at the passing of Peter Jackson. One of my most treasured possessions is a drawing Peter did for me some time ago. It shows General Gordon doffing his cap in greeting to myself. I was to have made it to a London pub for a drink with Peter. Alas, it was not to be. Peter Jackson was a great illustrator whose contribution to *EAGLE* and other publications and whose generous disposition and friendship towards the *EAGLE* Society were so well known.

I got in touch with Don Harley who appears to be settling down well in his new Hampshire home. Each time I get in touch with him he lets me in on some fresh aspect of *EAGLE*. Apparently Frank Hampson contemplated buying a windmill somewhere near Derek Lord's place in Sandwich. This was to have been the *EAGLE* artist's studio, complete with high elevation views from the high windows. The plan never came to fruition though - but it would have made an interesting addition. Imagine speaking of 'the Windmill' instead of 'the Bakery'!

Did you realise that there is an American actress called Charlize Theron? She even has a shock of golden-blonde hair to prove it. I saw a splendid photo-portrait of her in a L'Oréal hair dye advert in one of the glossy supplements.

I don't know how many members take the Daily Mail on a regular basis (depends on your politics, I suppose). If you do you'll have noticed that Max Hastings, look-alike son of Mac Hastings, now writes a regular page or two for that publication. He tackles contemporary issues with a style not unlike his father's and with equal enthusiasm ...

All being well I will be meeting up with you at the Manchester weekend.

Yours thoughtfully,

ANDREW COFFEY (Great Yarmouth)

E.T. Glad to hear that you have recovered; Andrew. Perhaps we should consider inviting Ms Theron along to Manchester as a guest!

Dear *EAGLE TIMES*,

I recently found three PC49 Annuals in a second handbookshop, all at £9.50. I asked for a discount on all three and was offered £25.00, which I took. When in the bag, I told the shopkeeper that I already had the three annuals but these I had just bought were signed by Brian Reece! "Who's he?" said the bookseller. The actor who played PC49 on the radio, was my reply. "Well blow me, I would have charged more if I'd have known and you have the cheek to ask for a discount!" said the bookseller with a smirk.

The moral of this story is, as any salesman knows, "Know your product".

Regards,

HOWARD CORN (Northampton)

Dear *EAGLE TIMES*,

I am enjoying Will Grenham's article on Science Fiction but I must correct a factual error on Doctor Who (in addition to being an ES member, I run the Doctor Who Appreciation Society). Episode one of Doctor Who was not transmitted live; in fact no episode of Doctor Who was ever shown live. A pilot of Doctor Who was made but never shown. Sydney Newman didn't like it so it was re-made. The re-made episode was shown on 23 November 1963 then repeated the week later. The pilot was finally shown on BBC2 in the early 90s. The colour Don Harley work was lovely - keep up the good work, Rod.

Yours,

IAN WHEELER (Harrogate)

E.T. Well spotted, that man! And Rod's article really is splendid and it does evoke some great memories.

Dear *EAGLE TIMES*,

Thank you for printing my article on the PHOENIX MISSION/GREEN NEMESIS projects in the spring issue - it has resulted in a number of inquiries and more page sponsors coming forward.

But the really big news is that the Dan Dare Corporation have now granted me a licence to publish these and other new stories, so I'm now in the process of putting together *SPACESHIP AWAY*, a new thrice-yearly *Dan Dare* fanzine (in full colour!) with luck starting in the autumn.

Yours faithfully,

ROD BARZILAY (Weymouth)

E.T. Well done Rod, you deserve success after all your hard work - and we feel good to have been there at the start.

Dear *EAGLE TIMES*,

This letter is an attempt to apologise for not answering your letter of twelve months ago. I came across it the other day with some papers in my Essex studio; that's all I can say - no excuses.

'Danny Dare' I had completely forgotten about. I can't remember how many I did and I never saw the other artist. In those days 12 gns was good money for half a day's work.

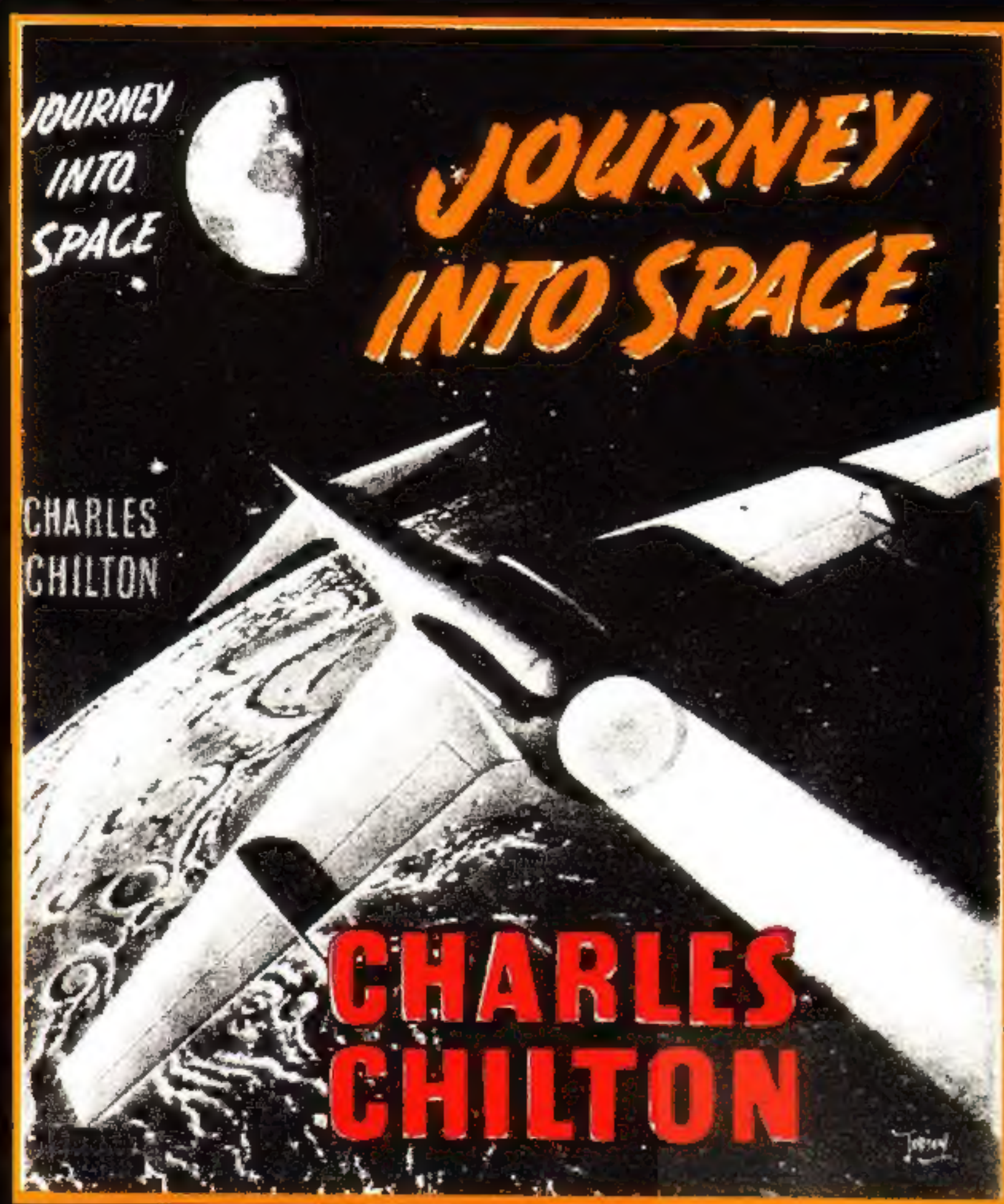
I know this is all a bit late but, I promise, if you dig up anything else from the past I'll own-up pronto!

Cheers,

BRUCE CORNWELL (Ruislip)

E.T. Bruce, it's just so good to hear from you - you are so much part of the 'golden age' of Dan Dare. Please, don't make it so long before we hear from you again.





PARIS

SOTTENS

ATHLONE

HIVERSUM

STRASBOURG

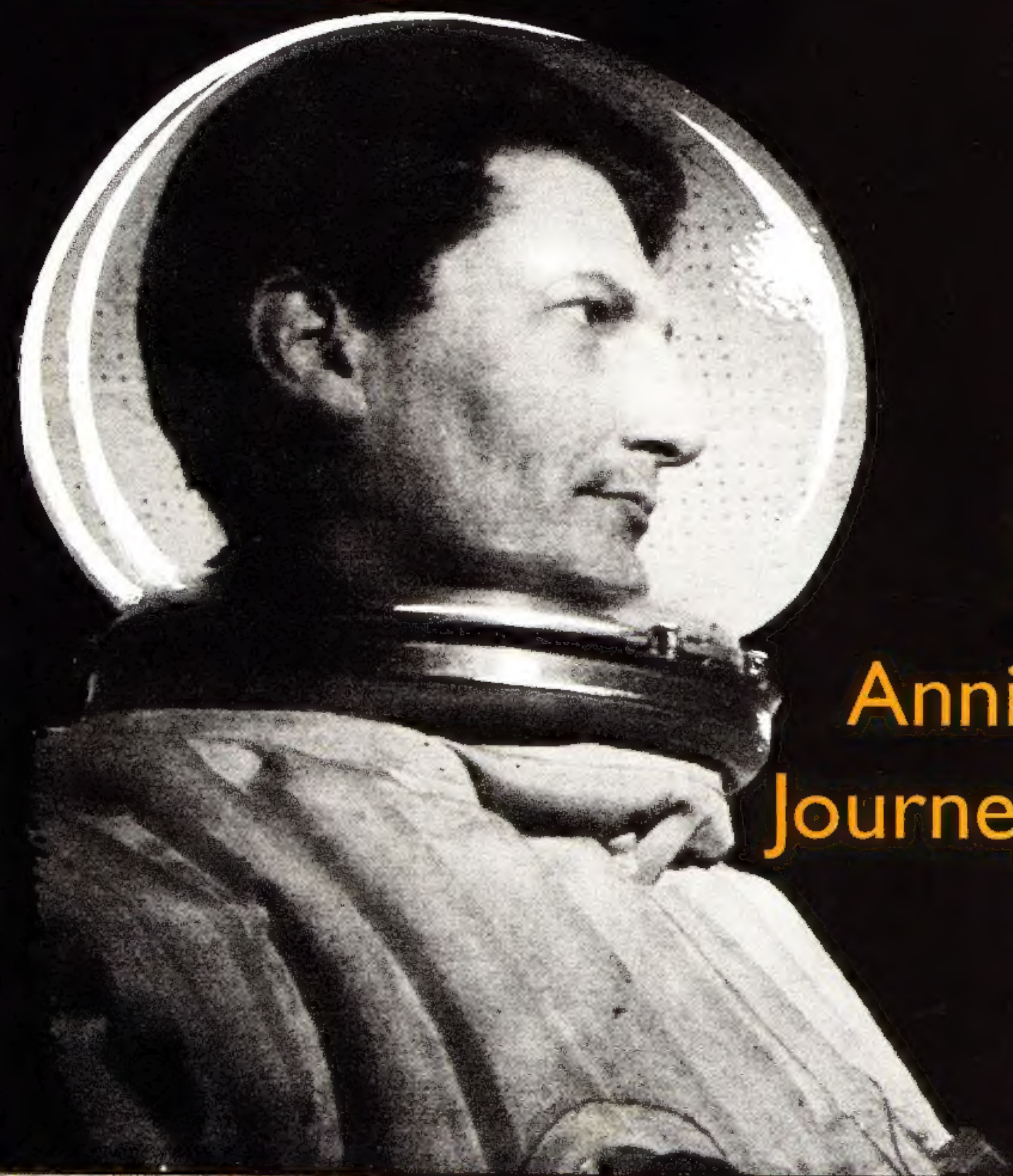
VIENNA I

Vol.16 No. 2 Autumn 2003



EAGLE TIMES

The quarterly journal of the Eagle Society



50th

Anniversary of
Journey into Space

THIRD

LIGHT

NORTH

WEST LONDON

MIDLAND

N.IRELAND

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SATURDAY 4 FEBRUARY 2012 (ONE NOVAD)
DAILY WORLD POST
LONDON
ENGLISH EDITION THE MUTTON PAPER

I.S.F. TO PROBE SPACE GRAVE-YARD

By SIMON GARRITY, SPACE FLEET CORRESPONDENT
Aden hero will lead high-risk mission

New York Friday. At a Universal Solar News Conference today, top I.S.F. officials announced that Pilot Major Steve Vallant is to command the related twin-drive survey ship "Marco Polo" on Operation Phoenix, a bid to salvage much needed spare-parts from the mysterious "Sargasso Sea of Space".

The first assignment is to recover the 2.16 craft that was shipped in the late-1950s under a 1957 The 2.16 is believed to be in space 41 conditions. Thanks to the efforts of the 10 officers, Pilot Captain Bob "Crane" Fink and Pilot Major "Valkyrie" MacFarlane, who were stranded on her for nine years. They will be returning as guided by space-robots.

Major Steve Vallant will be accompanied by a team of three flight data and a team of three flight data. The team will be accompanied by a team of three flight data and a team of three flight data.

The "Sargasso Sea of Space" is a vast area of space that is believed to be the site of many lost spacecraft. The team will be searching for the "Marco Polo" and other lost spacecraft.

The team will be accompanied by a team of three flight data and a team of three flight data.



COMMENT

Two Cheers for ISF

Two cheers for ISF. The mission is a high-risk one, but it is a mission that is worth the risk. The team will be searching for the "Marco Polo" and other lost spacecraft.

Food for the Stars
The team will be accompanied by a team of three flight data and a team of three flight data.



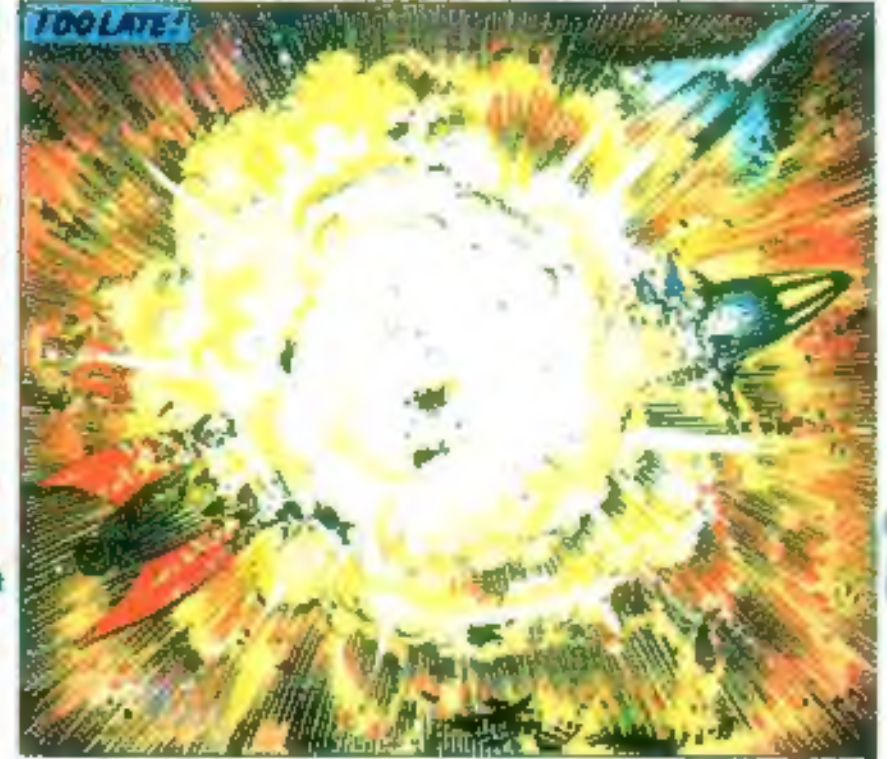
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EAGLE
EVERY WEDNESDAY
4½
COMPANION TO GIRL, SWIFT AND ROBIN

DAN DARE
PILOT OF THE FUTURE
THE PHOENIX MISSION
CUTJETS! RUN OUT TRANSFER TUBE.
RAY, LET HQ KNOW WE'VE ARRIVED.



2012 AD
It is some months after the defeat of the Helton and his robot armies. Earth is busy rebuilding and Space Fleet resources are thin. A few spacecraft remain serviceable. The urgent need to restore the I.S.F. to look leads a number of options. Out of range of standard Space Fleet vessels, the Space Fleet vessels, the re-fitted deep-space craft, the "Marco Polo" arrives at the "Sargasso Sea of Space".



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